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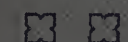

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DR. J. F. B. COLEMAN

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TUSKEGEE TO VOORHEES

The Booker T. Washington Idea
Projected by
Elizabeth Evelyn Wright

By
DR. J. F. B. COLEMAN

The R. L. Bryan Company
Columbia, S. C.

1922

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Foreword

This book gives a brief story of a simple, great character. I knew her well.

Miss Wright was a poor girl, but blessed with riches beyond the reach of figures used by men—the riches of an abiding faith.

She was frail and sick in body; she suffered from cold and hunger. She bore all with patience, and stayed not. Long, weary miles did not detain her. Rebuffs and refusals were disappointing, but with a prayer for help, she kept her way. To ill-timed and bitter opposition, from those she was seeking to help, she gave silent submission, and kept her course for their welfare.

Thousands of dollars passed through her hands, without a thought of a farthing for her own needs or comfort.

She had a vision of large buildings in wide, growing fields, each building thronged with eager youth, with paths leading out into the world travelled by hundreds of colored boys and girls, hopeful, strong, reliant.

She toiled through countless ills and troubles until the fields were secured, the buildings erected, and the children gathered. She made the vision true.

Young man or woman! Do the good fruits of the world seem forever beyond your reach? Take heed of her life here written. Would you give hope and joy to others? Have a vision and make it true.

GEORGE W. KELLEY,
Chairman of Board of Trustees.

DR. J. F. B. COLEMAN, Author

Author's Preface

The following record was undertaken at the urgent request of many of Miss Wright's closest friends and admirers. It has been delayed in the hope that this demand would soon cease, and the labor required to collect and sift the facts avoided. Instead it has grown more insistant with the passing years. It were hardly possible to deny the plea that the inspiration of such a unique life; humble in origin, of high aim, brief but intense in action, and marvelous in accomplishments, ought not to be lost to the vast army of colored boys and girls who aspire to noble manhood and womanhood; and specially to those who find themselves in hard circumstances, yet long to do something worth while to help the race in its upward climb.

In very truth the author was conscripted into this particular service. His acquaintance with Miss Wright while she was still with us was casual and of brief duration; and she left no diary or written records from which such a biography could be conveniently constructed. Means and resources for discovering and patiently sifting the facts were limited. All of which circumstances taken together have made the assembling of the facts recorded in this book a rather difficult job. Nevertheless every difficulty has been compensated for many times over by inspiring revelations. The excursions here and there to places where she labored, and conversations held with those who worked with her, and others in whose homes she abode for more or less brief

periods, have been like digging for gold in a rich mine. Each separate account revealing some new and valuable phase of a character whose abounding wealth may never be known.

Each chapter as completed has been submitted for corrections to Mrs Jessie C. Dorsey-Greene, of Detroit, Mich., and Judge Geo. W. Kelley, of Rockland, Mass. Miss Dorsey, before she became Mrs. Greene, was co-founder with Miss Wright of the Voorhees Normal and Industrial School. They labored together almost from the very beginning of the work until Miss Wright's death. Miss Dorsey remained with the School as Vice-Principal several years afterwards. Judge Kelley knew Miss Wright as a girl, supported her in school, and followed her every step in the work of establishing and building her school. He was the first President of the Board of Trustees, and holds that position until now.

Prominent among those who furnished the author with minor details for this record was Mr. S. P. Porter, who recently died an honored member of the Board of Trustees. He was one of the five men organizing the Board. He met Miss Wright at the train when she first came to South Carolina to teach, and entertained her at his home. He supported her in all her efforts to build the school. When she finally succeeded he moved near the School and settled permanently. The same may be said of Mr. Jackson Wiggins, still a trusted watchman on the school grounds. He followed the early efforts of the Founder with many a timely aid, and still retains in vivid memory all that happened in the dark days of her hardest struggles.

THE AUTHOR

CHAPTER I

IN THE FAMILY CIRCLE

Who in all this fair Southland has not heard of the red hills of Georgia? They have been friends of freedom—freedom that has on occasion been abused. But which, nevertheless, has contributed no little bit to the high ideals of a multitude of the worthy sons and daughters of two races, most of whom have been contented to serve in their native State and community. Others have gone abroad to help in the larger fields. Among the latter was Elizabeth Evelyn Wright, the seventh child of a family of twenty-one children, nineteen of whom were Wrights, and two were Fowlkes by a former marriage. Miss Virginia Rolfe's first husband, Stephen Fowlkes, was drowned while working on breastworks at Columbus, Ga., during the Civil War. Then she was married to Mr. Wesley Wright and completed her family of twenty-one, among whom was Elizabeth Evelyn.

Both mother and father were natives of Talbotton, for Talbotton is an old town, one of the oldest in the State of Georgia. It knows full well the long cruel story of slavery. It held on longest to the crumbling institution, and has been one of the hardest to forget. It is a dull, slow, farming community that retains, even until now, much of its original indifference to progress. For forty-seven years its only connection by railroad with the outside world was a seven-mile branch line connecting with the Central of Georgia

road to Paschal. The town itself is located among an uneven group of hills, from several of which a grand and inspiring landscape stretches out before the eyes for many miles. The hills descend in regular gradation to an almost meadow level and then rise gradually until in the distance they stand high against the wall of heaven. This slope being covered with vari-colored vegetation, interspersed among open fields, give the horizon a more distinct appearance. One cannot look abroad on these surroundings without feeling a touch of the infinite.

Three miles southeast of the Court House of this quiet, out-of-the-way town, on the William Rolfe Place, the eighteenth day of August, A. D. 1876, Elizabeth Evelyn Wright was born. A child of no great promise, her arrival created no unusual stir in the community. When the baby's introductory wail fell on the stillness of that August evening about twilight, as the farmers sat around their cabin doors, smoking and talking after supper and a hard day's toil, "Jenny has another gal" was the only comment, and the tired laborers drifted off to bed one by one, as they had been compelled to do in the dark days of slavery. The Grandmother took charge and watched through the night, and became the baby's nurse for a while. The mother took her place on the farm as soon as the alloted time for her confinement was up.

From that day until Lizzie was five years old her life was the life of the ordinary plantation child. As a baby, often she was left sitting alone in the cabin floor until she cried herself to sleep, or with other

babies left under the same shade tree or in the sand to take care of themselves while their youthful nurses, usually brothers and sisters just a little older than the babies, hunted berries or played elsewhere in the sand. The mothers came out of the farm at noon to give their babies the mid-day meal and they nursed no more until night. These were the days of reconstruction in the South, and the colored farmer was but little removed from the hopeless conditions of slavery. The day of freedom had indeed dawned, but he was far from knowing its meaning and its promise.

At the age of five, Lizzie, as she was now called, was sent to live with her grandmother, Lydia Rolfe, about two miles out in another direction from the Talbotton Court House. The grandmother was a widow, and lived with her son, Jus W. Tolge, who in this way became the real guardian of his young niece. Being thus separated from the children of the community she became the constant companion of her aged grandmother. This may be noted as the first turn in the road that should finally lead her to distinction. In this home were no children with whom she might play and the nearest neighbor was quite a half mile away. Her childish propensities were sobered thus early in life by a kind of solitude. The follies of youth were largely avoided as she took counsel only of the experienced.

Lizzie's new home was in a grove on a small eminence. At the foot of the hill to the north of the house was a gurgling spring of cool water. As soon as she was old enough it was her duty to bring water

from here for the household. Much of the leisure of those early years was spent around this quiet spot because a large shade tree stood near by and the soil was sandy and full of pebbles. Out of these pebbles the lonely child learned to improvise her own playthings; and indirectly to think for herself. Coming to the house one day with sparkling eyes full of wonder, she asked simply, "Grandma, who moves the shade?" The day was hot and by chance she was building a play house near the edge of a cool shade. The burning rays of the sun gradually crept over her position, forcing her back until she found it inconvenient to continue her work. Noting then for the first time that her house was fully in the sun's light, she decided that the shade had moved. "Child," said the surprised old lady, trying hard to get her thoughts together, "The shade moves itself when the sun moves." As quick as thought came the next question, in the natural order according to the constitution of the child mind and all logical thinking, "Who moves the sun?" and the reply, "God," which seemed not at all to satisfy the young inquirer; for she stood for a few minutes gazing at grandmother with wondering eyes while crowds of half-formed questions rose and subsided in her mind.

Already Lizzie was being drilled in her bed-time prayers but she had seldom seen inside of a church. The nearest one was too far away for attendance at the Sunday School on Sunday morning as the older folks did not attend these exercises, and it was not then the custom to carry small children to the regular church services. The subject matter of the usual

sermons was not adapted to their youthful understanding, and the manner of delivery was rather shocking to the nerves and tender sensibilities of children and exciting to the older folks.

From this time forth Grandma responded to the inquisitiveness of the child with many things pertaining unto the Kingdom of Heaven. And it was during these early days that the seed was sown, that have fruit in womanhood in a life most remarkable for its simple faith in God. Lizzie was fortunate in that she lived close to Nature and had a Godly instructor at this period of her life; and had the advice of experience without the counter proposals and suggestions to evil that are the stock in trade of the indiscriminate playgrounds of youth. Her character was thus formed on the real and true, from which she never departed. To her latest day she never seemd quite able to understand the existence of falsehood. The make believe in the world was always a source of annoyance to her, because she knew only one side of life, the real.

At the age of seven or eight years she began her school career. It was a district school conducted in the church. It lasted only three months, and these were the winter months which made the attendance of the smaller children rather irregular. The first term she attended, the season was one of much bad weather. The church was an unfinished weatherboard structure, covered with undressed oak boards, a building almost impossible to heat on a cold day. The few more than a dozen days that our young pupil attended school that year didn't suffice to make her

master of the A B C's. The most lasting impression made during this experience was made by the uncomfortably tall benches from which her little feet dangled for a miserably long time in the morning and again in the afternoon.

The two years at this school were of little value in the training of our future teacher and school builder. The time for a change was drawing nigh. So when Lizzie was ten years old the Uncle secured a house in town where he has since lived and where many years afterwards the grandmother died. Here the young pupil had better school facilities.

For many years Talbotton's only railroad connection with the outside world was by a seven-mile branch line running out to meet the Central of Georgia Road at Paschal. Near the terminus of this was found a new home for our growing pupil; and here she stayed until, some years later, following a larger vision she left the quiet little town for her first trip abroad, en route for another quiet town similarly situated in the State of Alabama, where Mr. Washington had built a great school. Tuskegee sits back about six miles from the main line of the Western of Alabama Railroad; and is reached by a short line train that meets the passengers at Chehaw. The names of these two towns of sister States are forever linked with the history of industrial education in the South. To the one went a school founder and master builder, and from the other came one of the most successful pupils and followers.

Elizabeth found in her new home several advantages which she did not have in the country. Chief

among them was a better and nearer school house, more comfortable seats, a few weeks longer school term and a better prepared teacher. With these advantages it was soon discovered that she had in her character elements of sterling worth. In the school family she was not rated as brilliant; yet in mental ability and concepts of judgment, she was far above the average. Though young she speedily won favor among teachers and students and soon became the recognized leader among the latter.

A little distance up from the foot of the slope by the side of the street leading from the house in which the family was now residing, towards the square in which the Court House stands, and around the four sides of which are distributed the principal business houses and offices, stands a large oak tree with its low, thick, wide-spreading branches, making such excellent shade that the neighborhood children and passersby are tempted to loiter there. Underneath it Elizabeth passed every day on her way to and from school and when not at school she often sought the comfort and quietude of this shade for study, and sometimes just for play or meditation. The many thick roots protruding above the surface of the ground made fairly comfortable seats with back rest against the trunk of the tree.

One day late in March, when our school girl was in her fourteenth year, she was spending one of her brief recreation periods from the heavier household duties that had fallen to her lot at this now familiar resort. A gentle wind arose from the southeast and was blowing briskly, when it lifted a ragged piece of

newspaper from the shallow trench that separated the sidewalk from the street proper, and carried it along whirling and turning lively and then falling playfully to the ground only to rise and advance further before the pursuing wind. It happened to be traveling toward the very spot where Elizabeth was sitting and she happened to notice it. Its frolics and the wind kept her attention for the time being, simply because nothing else presented itself. At last when it rose and circled and fell at her feet she became mildly curious to find out what message this strange visitor had brought. She reached down and rescued it from the teasing gusts of wind and holding it up between thumb and forefinger as though suspicious of its unsanitary origin and appearance, she read thereupon one of the early advertisements of the Tuskegee Industrial School. It told briefly how poor colored boys and girls could get an education by working their way through school. And as a picture of one of the early campus buildings was a part of the advertisement it made a strong appeal to Elizabeth's youthful ambition. She kept it. Having made it as presentable as possible with the scissors, it was shown to her teacher, who was a Northern white lady who had heard of Tuskegee but knew very little about it. However, she would take it upon herself to write and find out more.

In due course of time letters and printed matter came giving a full description of the school and the opportunities it offered colored young men and women who were poor but willing to work while prepar-

FIRST BARN

ONE OF COTTAGES USED ON PRESENT TRACT

ing themselves for useful careers. Elizabeth was called in to see her teacher, and both, being greatly inspired by the information, determined at once that Elizabeth should by all means go to this school. They would work together to that end. The teacher had no surplus funds with which she could help her pupil in the laudable venture, but she would cooperate in every possible way to help her make money enough to secure the necessary clothes and for traveling expenses. The first job would be to do the light house work in the home where the teacher was boarding. The teacher herself would be the temporary savings bank for her pupil in order that there might be no miscarriage of their plans.

Needless to say that our future school builder left this interview with her teacher-friend and faced homeward with a veritable riot of conflicting thoughts and emotions surging in waves through her brain and heart. There was no adequate description for the state of her feelings or the character of her thinking, only she was happy. On account of this delightful confusion now overwhelming her very being, she would take the longest way home, walk the slowest and think the fastest in order to be her normal self again when that spot was reached finally. Notwithstanding this precaution, she was never able to tell what she thought about on the way nor how nor when she arrived at home. It was one of those delightful spells in youth when thoughts and feelings merge, and the result is a happy boy or girl; nothing else. No better way of identifying the inner life at these high altitudes of experience.

Booker T. Washington may have swept the floors clean upon his first arrival at Hampton, but they could not have surpassed the tidiness that now marked every feature of household work done by Elizabeth. Whether she was inspired by a higher ideal or moved to greater carefulness in her work preparatory to give satisfaction in her new job, one or both may never be known. But the fact of the improvement stood out and the neighbors spoke about it whenever they dropped in for a little community gossip. What she was thinking began to tell in what she did. And this is an universal and unavoidable fact in all human experience. The thought of the heart will out, directly or indirectly, positively or negatively.

When Elizabeth broke the news of her desire to leave home and attend school in some far away unheard of corner of the earth, it created a small sensation in the family. She discovered that neither her uncle nor grandmother had ever dreamed that such a thing was possible, nor even desirable. She was told plainly that it just couldn't be done; and furthermore for a girl her age to have such wild notions in her head didn't argue well for her future as a decent person in the community. To these simple, domestic folk the outside world was no place for the young and innocent. For them it was everywhere, always and only evil. They knew nothing of the vast army of men and women who are daily giving their lives in individual and combined efforts and through institutions, for the benefit of others. So when, in private conference they had thoroughly canvassed "Liz-

zie's'' inclination to go astray from the home training, it was decided to give her a final and solemn warning against the error of her way.

This opposition to her plan Elizabeth reported in detail to her teacher-friend, who went in person to talk over the situation with the uncle and grandmother. They were not easily convinced. She went a second and a third time and then had to lay almost daily siege to this humble home before the guardians' consent was finally secured to let Elizabeth go to Tuskegee for further training.

Meantime the little trust fund in the hands of the teacher was growing gradually. Elizabeth had added a small family washing to her remunerative employment. A penny here and one there, earned as opportunity afforded and hoarded with unvarying diligence from day to day, finally brought her savings up to where she could safely make the venture. Early one morning in September she bade family, teacher and friends good-bye, and boarded the train for Columbus, Ga. Here she spent several days at the home of a relative getting used to being away from home before going too far. Finding herself in splendid spirit at the end of this period, she journeyed on to Tuskegee.

CHAPTER II.

SCHOOL DAYS AT TUSKEGEE

When Elizabeth arrived at Tuskegee, it was indeed a wonderland to her untried imagination. She was amazed at what her eyes beheld of school buildings, shops and attractively appointed residences; of fine looking and neatly dressed teachers, men and women of her race such as she had never seen or ever imagined existed anywhere in this world; of such large numbers of earnest and intelligent young men and women; and all busily engaged from morn 'til night. An unerring Providence had directed her to this well-organized and skillfully directed camp of industry and now she must find her place in it and adjust herself to the new surroundings in the best possible way.

In the first place the small balance in cash she had on arrival at Tuskegee was not enough to enroll her as a day student. And as she was not a candidate for any particular trade, she matriculated in the night school and was assigned to kitchen duty. And then she became lost to particular notice as did hundreds of her fellow students, while patiently laying the foundation for successful careers. Elizabeth was diligent in every duty, but this was not especially a mark of distinction among so large a body of students where premiums were placed upon work well done, and penalties, more or less severe, were attached to slothfulness.

However, hers was one of those rare cases where impending failure brought to her rescue the very things she needed most to make her life a success. The day's work and evening classes proved to be too heavy a burden for a constitution naturally frail. And when her health began to fail the matter was brought to the attention of Mrs. Washington, who upon investigation found Elizabeth physically unable to measure up to the rigid program required of students who had to work out all of their expenses. She must be given employment less exacting on her physical energy and changed from the night to the day school; or else it would be necessary for her to withdraw from the school entirely. Unless some one came to the rescue at once she would be compelled to adopt the latter course. It was at this first crisis in her school career that Judge George W. Kelley, of Rockland, Mass., provided the scholarship that made it possible for her to remain in school and continue her studies. It was through Mrs. Washington's efforts that Judge Kelley came to know of Miss Wright's poor health, high aims and patient struggle to stay in school. This gave Mrs. Washington a personal concern in the young lady's welfare that she would not have had if evil days had not threatened to nip this life, with its promise of usefulness, in the bud. From now on she was lifted out of the unidentified mass of students for special consideration. Lighter and more responsible duties were selected for her. Frequent changes of employment were also necessary; and this very necessity brought to her the opportunity of close personal contact with

Mrs. Washington, which of itself gave her the best training for social work among women and girls.

Judge Kelley also came to have a personal interest in the young woman, whose independent attempt to educate herself had made such a fine impression upon her teachers. The letters she wrote him in gratitude for the scholarship was the beginning of a correspondence between benefactor and pupil that ended only with the latter's death and was the basis of one of the most beautiful and helpful friendships that was ever formed between the seat of Justice and the school-builder's program. Miss Wright's earliest letters to the Judge, setting forth her life's purpose in utter sincerity and faith, inspired him with the wisdom, love and confidence of a father, and as such his rich, sober and timely counsels were sought and used to guide her footsteps aright in every doubtful situation. When she finally got her diploma from Tuskegee and went out to teach she kept him informed as to her whereabouts and prospects. In each separate effort to find a suitable location for her proposed industrial school he was her adviser and when the first site was purchased his personal check was given in payment. He helped her to find friends to support the school when it was organized. And when a Board of Trustees was chosen he agreed to serve as one of them, being elected the first president of the board. In this capacity, his thorough knowledge and wide experience have been freely and constantly used to advance every interest of Miss Wright and her school. And when in the midst of her very difficult labors, she fell sick, as frequently she did, his

letters were among the earliest to reach her bedside with messages of deep sympathy, cheer and hope. Many a time he pulled himself away from the pressing engagements at his home in the North and traveled to the distant South at his own expense, for the sole purpose of helping Miss Wright through some depressive period of her struggle. Nor has his interest in the work waned in the least since the founder's death.

In trying to calculate the value of a friend like Judge Kelley in the accomplishment of a work like that accomplished by Miss Wright, the lines of demarkation disappear entirely and there is no way of telling how much of the total credit is due the one and how much is due the other. It is safe to say, however, that Miss Wright's one indispensable need in acquiring an education and in the most effective use of that education afterwards, was a friend such as Judge Kelley has proven to be; and yet if his friendship had lavished itself upon some other student instead of Elizabeth Evelyn Wright, in all probability the result would have been entirely different. His timely aid and friendly counsel throughout led her into the way of large things and this is how she came ultimately to do large things which otherwise she could not have done.

Miss Wright added to her school experience one year as a compositor in the printing office, under the management of Mr. Thomas Mann. Mr. Mann left Tuskegee many years ago, and is now in the Post-office service in New York City, but he remembers still with evident appreciation the excellent deport-

ment and faithful work "of a tall young woman, who was very frail and of sober countenance, whose splendid record was only marred by frequent absences on account of illness."

School days and the most careful dieting did not seem to improve Miss Wright's frail constitution. After one of the hardest and bravest fights to stay with her class to the end, she finally had to give up in her senior year and leave school to seek recuperation elsewhere. This was in 1892. In October of the same year, instead of going back to Tuskegee she went out to Hampton County, South Carolina, to teach. In choosing this location she was following the advice of her lifelong friend, and one of the first trustees of Voorhees, Mrs. Almira S. Steele, Founder and Director of Colored Orphanage in Chattanooga, Tennessee. At that time Mrs. Steele owned and supported a school in Hampton County. Five miles from the Steele school site and two miles from Early Branch, the little railroad station where she got off the train, at a little place called Louisville, and in an unceiled, weather-boarded cabin 15x20, Miss Wright taught her first school in South Carolina. The term lasted only three months. And for three months Hampton County had within its confines a prophet and yet unknown to honor, and that modest little school room daily housed all the dynamic power that afterwards developed into Voorhees Normal and Industrial Institute, the history of whose growth form the closing chapters of this record. At the close of this brief term Miss Wright returned to

DORMITORY FOR GIRLS ON FIRST TRACT OF LAND IN TOWN

Tuskegee and was there until 1894, when she was graduated with the class of that year.

Miss Crosby, one of the twenty-eight members of the senior class that Miss Wright now joined, relates how at the close of that year, when she and Miss Wright were returning together from the woods where the seniors' picnic was held, and talking of the Commencement sermon to be preached before the graduates on tomorrow, Miss Wright was greatly depressed because she had no dress for the occasion. They discussed the advisability of her staying away from the exercises and had about decided that it was the best thing to do. As soon as they were in their rooms, however, Mrs. Washington sent for them. Two packages had come that very afternoon from an unknown friend in the North. When Miss Wright opened hers and found therein a dress suitable for immediate use with very little alteration, she could hardly control her joy. She was thoroughly convinced that God alone had seen her need and had sent this timely relief.

A few months before her last illness Miss Wright wrote the following statement concerning her school days at Tuskegee:

"I went to Tuskegee in 1888. I was very young and, coming from the country where I had never seen a comfortable dwelling, the sight of the large brick and wooden buildings made a lasting impression upon my mind. It was a hard thing for me to understand how a man of my race could have acquired so much and I did not comprehend it clearly until I was out of school.

"I was at Tuskegee only a short time before I made up my mind to try and be the same type of woman as Mr. Washington was of a man. The first week I was there, I was told that Mr. Washington would not let any one stay there who used slang. I had never been told it was unlady-like to use by-words before and decided at once never to say anything that I would be afraid to let Mr. Washington hear.

"The talks which he gave us on Sunday evenings in the Chapel did more to mold my character than anything else. I made them a part of me while in school and they stick to me now like lead. His talks influenced me to try to help my fellow men to help themselves, and if a way was not opened for me, I must open it myself.

"I always considered myself one of Mrs. Washington's disciples and would sit at her feet as Paul did at Gamaliel. Every Saturday afternoon, she held meetings down town with the country women who came in town to purchase their supplies. It was my duty to go down, ask the women in and serve coffee and bread. Mrs. Washington would then proceed to talk on various subjects which I can never forget. Those meetings trained me to do effectual work among my people. I know if it had not been for Mrs. Washington's training, I could not carry on the work in which I am now engaged.

"I was a Christian when I went to Tuskegee and liked to sew. Sewing, millinery and cooking were the only trades they had for girls at that time. I studied cooking one term but my great thought was to do

work similar to what I am now doing and therefore I kept an eye single to all the movements and working operations of the school.

"I was a Christian when I went to Tuskegee and the prayer-meetings on Friday evenings strengthened me and helped to prepare me for the religious work which I have to do for the students of this school.

"After my second year I was made responsible for a great many things, such as taking the girls to Chapel, inspecting their rooms, assisting in the dining room, and Mrs. Washington also entrusted me to the opening of all the barrels which came to the school for two years. I learned the lesson of responsibility in this way and I left feeling that I could be and was willing to be responsible for most anything.

"The teachers were models for me. I had never seen such gentle and refined ladies and gentlemen. Their lives influenced me for good and it was my desire to hurry and get out into the world, connect myself with some school and try to set a living example for those who came under my charge. My work, so far, since leaving school has been a success. The thing which impresses me most at present is the condition of my race in the rural districts. If I ever amount to anything or accomplish any good in life, it will be because of the good influence which Tuskegee had over me."

CHAPTER III

SEEKING A LOCATION

When Mr. Washington went out from Hampton Institute to establish a school in the black belt of Alabama after the pattern of his Alma Mater, his ideal was backed by no less determination and devotion than that which controlled his pupil, Elizabeth Evelyn Wright, when she, with a Tuskegee diploma in her hand, sought a similar district in South Carolina where she might establish a second Tuskegee. The pupil lacked the robust health and physical vigor of her great teacher, but was no whit behind in the ability to make every circumstance of her life contribute to the one thing she wanted to do.

The interest which Judge Kelley had shown in Miss Wright during her student days at Tuskegee was continued unabated in the young teacher as she went forth into the world burning with a desire to serve her people where it should appear that her service was most needed. Hampton County was now fully decided upon as a desirable district in which to locate an industrial school after the manner of her Alma Mater. Mrs. Steele had met with considerable opposition in her work among the colored people of this locality. In the judgment of Miss Wright's counsellors this was due solely to the fact that the white people of the community disliked the idea of having a white woman personally associated with the colored people in the intimate work of education. It was

MRS. A. S. STEELE

generally suspected that the burning of the Steele School was largely inspired by this feeling on the part of the whites. However true to fact this suspicion was, one thing at least was beyond doubt, and that is, when Judge Kelley met Miss Wright and her assistant, Miss Hattie Davidson, at the home of Mr. S. P. Porter near McNeals and the Steele School site, one day early in October, 1894, the buildings of the plant were in ashes, and there only remained the ten acres of land belonging thereto.

After much thought and prayer during the night these three friends arose the next morning and arranged for a transfer of this houseless property to Miss Wright on which to build her proposed school. The price was five dollars an acre, which the Judge paid in cash on the spot, and then left Miss Wright to begin the work in an improvised school house. This site is seven miles from the Hampton Court House and about five miles from where she taught the district school two years before. At last this young woman with burning zeal stood at the threshold of her life's work, ready to make her first plunge into the chilly waters of experience. Could she stand the shock and not allow her spirit to sour and grow cold as so many of her fellows have done, who aspired to do noble deeds without first sitting down and counting the cost?

The school was placed in charge of Miss Davidson to do the teaching and Miss Wright started on an itinerary through the country to interest the people in the school, and also to raise funds for a building that was needed at once. To begin with she got a very

poor hearing, and still poorer contributions for the proposed building. Her traveling was mostly afoot, sometimes walking ten, fifteen, and even as high as twenty miles a day. Occasionally she was given a lift along the way by a kindly disposed wagoner; less frequently she enjoyed the luxury of a buggy ride with passersby. Now and again some friend would take her on a trip in his buggy. But seldom were such services free; as a rule a small charge was made. Whatever the method of travel, Miss Wright never missed a chance of putting her cause before the people. That fall and winter Hampton County saw a strange apparition upon its highways, a lone woman of very frail body and poorly clad, walked thereon or rode thereon as opportunity permitted, in all kinds of weather; and Hampton County people wherever congregated felt a strange spell when this stranger spoke to them, for Elizabeth E. Wright never spoke unless she poured out her whole spirit in the words she uttered. Her report shows ten dollars as the highest amount received during this season at any one meeting. This was at a Baptist Association held at Willow Grove Church, and the expense of getting to and from that meeting was $2. About this time Mr. Porter says Miss Wright became very sick at his house where she was boarding, and was helpless for several days. When he insisted on going for the doctor, she said, "No, I don't want the doctor, Dr. Jesus will let me get up directly. I can't, I will not take the doctor's medicine." During this attack the day came when she had to fill a night engagement at church twelve miles away. Her hostess

said, "Miss Wright, you can't go tonight, you are not able to travel." And she replied, "Yes, but I have to go. The Lord will not suffer me to lie here, knowing that I have this work to do." Twice on this trip she was almost exhausted and had to stop for rest. She met an audience of more than two hundred persons and received toward her new building $1.50. These days saw the beginning of her tears, but they saw no weakening of her determination. It was beginning to dawn upon her now that that which had been so nobly conceived could not be brought to life without a deep measure of pain and sorrow and the constant hazard of absolute failure.

When the school session ended the meagre appropriation made by the County Board of Education was just about exhausted and the two teachers had no other means of support, or source of financial aid. Miss Wright had deposited in the bank as received the small donations from the churches. This account was sacred, beyond the least use of it for any personal needs. Therefore, for the time being, they withdrew from the field and took up summer work with Mrs. Steele in Chattanooga, having their railroad fares advanced by this good lady. Meantime Judge Kelley had ordered certain building materials placed on the grounds at McNeal's, the former site of the Steele School. This consisted of several thousand feet of lumber and ten thousand bricks. When the Judge learned that the lumber had been mysteriously burned he decided to make another visit to this locality. Accordingly he came just in time to meet Miss Wright returning from Tennessee. Miss David-

son did not return. The experiences of the past season were too severe. It seemed to her like going on a wild goose chase. She saw nothing ahead beckoning her on so she stopped. With Miss Wright it was different. She had a vision. She lived even now in the school her mind had framed; and for this reason was least annoyed by adverse circumstances. She was already helping her people to the extent of her longings and felt not the thankless drudgery of her present labors. Among strangers and along the weary way she toiled, but to her it was not toil, because it anticipated an industrial school, affording educational opportunities for her neglected people. Before her eyes the broad highway suddenly dispossessed of its barren lonesomeness, transformed itself into a beautiful campus, restful to the weary feet and charming to the eye. So likewise did the humble cabins by the roadside, under the magic spell of her thinking, become dormitories housing large numbers of earnest students. Other buildings of the roadside collection lent themselves to other purposes until the imaginary plant was complete. And in this air castle institution dwelt the soul of Elizabeth Evelyn Wright in perfect confidence, during the days of her hardest trials and most crushing disappointments.

After due consultation it was decided to abandon the former site of the Steele School. Within easy view of the Early Branch station, on the Seaboard Air Line Railroad, is an old mill place. This was offered for sale by a recent purchaser. As several houses were already on the place that could be used

GIRLS LEARNING HOW TO WAIT TABLE

for an immediate opening of the school, an effort was made to purchase it. Mr. S. P. Porter acted as agent for Judge Kelley and Miss Wright and secured the keys to the various buildings. The next day they went to inspect the property, but in order not to invite opposition by attracting the attention of the curious and to hide their real purpose, they avoided the public highway, and took a back road that ran mostly through the woods. They found more than half of the 120 acres belonging to the place in an excellent state of cultivation and the buildings in fairly good repair. This determined them at once to purchase the place if possible. A bargain was struck and arrangements were made for the immediate transfer of the property. Miss Wright had thus allotted the various buildings for use: "There was a little cottage with six rooms, which was to be the principal's and teachers' dwelling. There was a large wagon shed, built high up off the ground so that wagons could be kept underneath. We planned to have a floor put in the upstairs part, and open some windows, and that was to be for boarding students if any should come. A little further on there was a store house that had been used for a little country store. This was to be used for the classes until we could build a more convenient school house." The day's work was considered a success and hopes once more ran high. But ere the sun of that fair day had tucked its last ray under the curtain of night, the forest around that old mill site was lurid with flames of burning buildings. The enemy was on the alert. Somebody had discovered the secret purpose of these

school builders. The two friends were baffled, but not discouraged. It was now painfully evident that the opposition was not so much aimed against the person of Mrs. Steele, as had been thought, as it was directed against the establishment of a school for colored children in that community. The Judge returned North with some doubt in his mind as to the best course to be pursued.

Once more Miss Wright faced the issue squarely and single-handed. She would go back to the classroom and teach to earn her living expenses, meantime using every spare moment to cast about for another and better location. Giving the project up seems never to have shadowed her thinking for a single moment. To find a suitable place to build her school was the present problem and she would solve it if she lived. On going back to McNeals to reopen the school taught by Miss Davidson the previous year, she met the County Board's point blank refusal to provide for a school at that place any longer. Nothing abashed she set out on foot for Ruffins in Colleton County. Here one Rev. J. C. Smith had talked up a school for her on his work. However, she did not like the location, and came back to McNeal after six weeks spent in teaching a pay school at Ruffins. She taught a similar school in the home of Rev. Smith for several months, charging a tuition fee of 10c a week. Thus she supported herself during the fall and winter of 1895-96, while she negotiated for another small tract of land near the Hampton County Court House. There was a little four-room cottage on this place into which Miss Wright moved. Being

settled here she renewed her itinerary with increased activity, going out among the churches, sometimes spending weeks on the road before returning home for a bit of rest. This tested her strength to the last notch, and at last she suffered a complete breakdown, and went off to the Battle Creek Sanitarium for recuperation and medical treatment. This happened late in September. Miss Jessie Dorsey, a fellow-worker, had come to join Miss Wright in the work on the 19th of June. Therefore, it was upon her shoulders the responsibility for the work devolved in Miss Wright's absence.

CHAPTER IV

SEEKING A LOCATION

(*Continued*)

Through the efforts of Mrs. Almira S. Steele, of Chattanooga, their mutual friend, Miss Jessie Dorsey, of Coshocton, Ohio, and Miss Wright were brought together in the effort to establish an industrial school. Miss Dorsey finished the high school course in her native town, and was taking nurse training at the Battle Creek Sanitarium, when Mrs. Steele induced her to come South and enter the work with Miss Wright. It was thought that Miss Dorsey would prove to be a helpful companion in the home as well as a valuable associate in the school work. And she did. Many a time her skill as a trained nurse brought relief to her suffering companion, and enabled her to go when otherwise she might have been confined to a sick bed. Whether in the class-room or on the platform, in homes in search of friends or students, or soliciting funds in public or private, Miss Dorsey did her part. The two made ideal yoke fellows and worked together in love and mutual trust until the dark curtain fell between them, hiding the devoted leader from view.

When Miss Dorsey arrived on the scene, June 19, 1896, she found a little woman, much overworked, underfed, and poorly clad, living in a little four-room cottage in need of repairs on a small tract of land for which she had not paid; with no tangible means of

support save an indomitable will and the child-like faith that supported it. Naturally the young teacher was not over enthusiastic over the prospect. Although she tried hard to hide it, the chill had struck home; and Miss Wright was quick to see the disappointment. Others had come and gone because of the uncertain pay, the hand-to-mouth way of living and the dark outlook. And as matters now stood the odds were overwhelmingly against her. To fail to find a sympathetic helper whose shoulders would share the load, would be to fail in the undertaking. She would fail in neither. And so Miss Wright, as only Miss Wright could when deeply moved, laid bare her soul in its one overmastering aim to her new companion, completely captivating her and sealing a bond of perpetual friendship between them. So much so until ever afterwards they shared a common fortune in the single hope of a common reward.

This was opportune, for even then the adverse winds were making themselves felt more and more. On one of her many speaking tours among the churches, Miss Wright spoke one Sunday afternoon to a belated congregation in a little Baptist church down in Colleton County. In that congregation was a man by the name of Jackson Wiggins. (He had a son of the same name who was graduated from Voorhees within recent years.) After the speech this Mr. Wiggins, in a kind of swaggering manner, said to a friend standing near him: "If that woman will do what she says, I'll give her fifty dollars." The friend, more intent on getting some fun out of Mr. Wiggins' embarrassment than he was upon helping

the cause of education, slipped around and reported the offer to Miss Wright. An ordinary person would have suspected the joke, but she was not an ordinary person. She had the utmost faith in her fellow men. She took the offer seriously. She had not gone beyond the church door when she called for Mr. Wiggins and asked whether or not he meant what he said. "I was just talking," was the hesitating reply, "but I am willing to do all I can to help you. At any rate I won't take back what I said, until I hear you speak again." As fortune would have it he heard her again that night at a nearby school house and was persuaded to make the pledge. Upon the strength of this pledge Miss Wright opened a regular campaign for pledges and appointed a day early in October when all amounts pledged should be reported in cash at a grand rally for the school to take place on the school grounds at Hampton. It was towards the end of July when she planned the drive. For the two months intervening she literally stayed on the field, going day and night, to make the event a great success. Hampton County was thoroughly canvassed, and hundreds of pledges were secured, mostly small. Much was staked on the outcome.

October came at last and with it a worn and weary worker. The day was fair and preparations were made to accommodate a large crowd. The man whose pledge inspired the effort was on hand. He drove fifteen miles through the country to be present. And as he was an eye witness of what happened it is fortunate to have the report in his own words:

"I got up that Sunday morning before day. When

the sun rose I was six or seven miles from home. I got over there about ten o'clock. Before leaving home six men who also had made pledges to Miss Wright for the school came over and gave me $7.00 for her, and said they could not go. I said, 'Well, boys, she's going to look for us, and we all promised to meet and raise so much money.' When we got there, there was nobody about the place but her and Miss Dorsey and another teacher who had been teaching there. The rally was in her own house where she lived, but there was a church not far away where she planned to hold the rally if the crowd was too large for her house. Of all who promised to meet her, my wife and I were the only two who met her. After waiting about the grounds a long time and nobody else came, I went in the house where the women were and said, 'It is time for us to do what we are going to do, I've got to go fifteen miles. This thing was to take place here at eleven o'clock and here it is three o'clock. Nobody else is coming here today.' Then Miss Wright began to cry. I said, 'There is no use to cry. If you worry about these people you will cry yourself to death.' When I stepped out doors for a few minutes Miss Wright asked my wife behind my back, 'Do you reckon Mr. Wiggins has got his money?' My wife didn't know. I even had the seven dollars in my pocket and didn't say a word to her about it. Coming back in the house, I said, 'I promised this money to you and I am going to give it to you. I won't lie to you if I can help it. Now, Miss Wright, I don't know you, but I don't require a

scratch from you. I have my wife and Miss Dorsey to witness between me and you.

"Then I counted out first the seven dollars that I brought for the other men, and next my own pledge of $50.00. I said, 'It's like this with me, Miss Wright, some people may give you something and want you to give them double the amount back. I won't do that. Let you be successful or unsuccessful, if you build the school in South Carolina, or in the North or East or West, all right, the $50.00 is yours and I don't want it any more. Only promise me this, that if at any time any one of my children should knock at the door of your school, penniless, and want to go to school, you will take him in and allow him a chance!' The promise was made and has been kept. She told me that she and Miss Dorsey had been begging for money for the school several months and that they had $5.00 in the bank. That day she went to the bank before I left and deposited the money I paid her."

A short time before this and at a similar meeting being held in a Hampton County church in the interest of the school, the proceedings were interrupted by a subordinate school official who was a colored man, and who publicly denounced Miss Wright as a fake and unworthy the support of the people. The attack was so cowardly and bitter and withal so unexpected that her friends were moved to protest in no uncertain terms, with the result that a general scrimmage was narrowly averted. Miss Wright herself only warned her assailant in very mild language that the Lord would not bless a man who stooped to

GIRLS LEARNING TRUCK GARDENING

BOYS STRIPPING RIBBON CANE

take such unfair advantage of a defenseless woman. The man who did this thing was already approaching his journey's end more nearly than he suspected. Three weeks afterwards he fell down upon his door steps and died of a hemorrhage.

The failure of that October rally was the result of the false attitude of most of the preachers of that section, who, while permitting Miss Wright and Miss Dorsey to speak in their churches, advised their people not to give them money. Many of them even went farther in their opposition, charging that they were irresponsible characters trying to deceive the people and to be led off by them would be most unfortunate.

About this time it was noticed that the attitude of the white people of the community was anything but encouraging. It ranged from total indifference to unpleasant aggressiveness. One day while going down the street in Hampton the two teachers were accosted in a very insulting way by one of the ruder members of the opposite race. Miss Dorsey resented it by striking the offender in the face with her parasol. This brought matters to a crisis and when the defenseless teachers were threatened with violence they began to feel that their present location was unsafe as well as unpromising.

These two women had worked hard and had borne their many disappointments with cheerfulness. Still the outlook was becoming more gloomy every day. Miss Dorsey thus sums up the situation at this time: "Miss Wright was in very poor health, but nevertheless she continued her work. She succeeded in get-

ting several hundred dollars by contributions and this was deposited in the Bank of Hampton.

"When the time began to draw near to make a payment on the place at Hampton, we found that men, by order of the owner of the place, were cutting off the wood. Such unfair dealings caused Miss Wright to see that trouble was ahead, and she took this matter, as she took all other matters, to God in prayer and He directed her and advised her what to do. Hampton was not the place. The summer was gone now and broken down in health, tired in mind and body, this faithful worker sought recuperation for the first time in Battle Creek, Mich., under the care of one of America's greatest physicians and most skilled surgeons, Dr. J. H. Kellogg. After a stay of nearly three months she returned to Hampton on New Year's day, 1897, accompanied by Miss Lula Davis, who also graduated from Tuskegee. We decided at once to seek another location. Accordingly Miss Wright and I wandered from place to place like two lost children, seeking food and shelter among the people. Miss Davis remained in Hampton. At last we reached the village of Govan and thought of staying there.

This is how "the two lost children" lighted upon "the village of Govan and thought of staying there," and why they didn't stay.

Somebody advised Miss Wright to "get out of this low country," for the sake of her health, and also because, "this corner back here is the meanest place in South Carolina." Therefore, her further search for a desirable place to establish her school tended

away from the coastal regions. She took village by village, carefully examining the possibilities of each. First came Brunson, and then in order, Fairfax, Ulmers, Ehrhardt and Govan. At Ehrhardt an attempt was made to locate. A small tract of land about two miles out was offered for sale; a school committee was formed and the place inspected. In the very outset an ulterior motive not favorable to her plans on the part of her advisers was discovered, and the site was almost immediately abandoned.

At Govan the situation was more favorable. Our teachers found a tract of land more adaptable for school purposes, and near the railroad. It was owned by the depot agent, a very affable gentleman. He agreed to sell the desired tract for $500. And the inward laugh of hope once more exalted the spirit of Miss Wright and her associate. They approached the teacher of the village school, who was also pastor of the local church, and entered immediately into an agreement whereby he was to seek a school elsewhere for the next term, leaving the village school to be absorbed into the larger plans of the future school builders. As it was her custom to work through a committee of citizens in every community in which she tried to establish her school, Miss Wright felt free to draw further upon the generosity of her newly discovered friend. He was asked to suggest the names of proper persons to serve on such a committee, and urged to accept the chairmanship himself. In all these capacities he was only too glad to serve such courageous women and such a worthy cause. All matters pertaining to the purchase of the land

were placed in the hands of a committee, and a date fixed for a meeting at which Miss Wright and Miss Dorsey were to put their project before the people. They returned to Hampton to await the momentous day, feeling that the right place was found at last.

But on second thought the pastor at Govan felt that he had gone a step too far in allowing himself to be harnessed up by women and strangers whose integrity was yet to be proved. He concluded to himself privately that the only wise thing to do would be to get out of it. The only question being as to the best way to release himself.

When the day came our teachers were back at Govan glowing with enthusiasm for their chosen work. Mr. Wiggins had been employed to bring them through the country in his buggy. As they were speaking that night in the church he stood outside near a small group of men and overheard this remark: "We are not going to allow them to build a school here, and lead our people astray. The Agent says, if we want the land, we can have it." This group turned out to be a part of the new school committee, and Mr. Wiggins reported the circumstances to Miss Wright. She was loath to believe that such duplicity could be practiced by the leaders of the people. She had not long to wait for the startling confirmation. The next morning at eight o'clock sharp every one of those gentlemen, including the kindly disposed chairman, went with Miss Wright to the agent's office to make final arrangements for buying the land, and stood solemnly in line with hats

off, while Miss Wright walked quietly up to the agent's desk and announced the purpose for which the committee had called. Their solemn countenances showed every mark of surprise, when the agent, giving but one slight upward glance, bluntly said, "You can't get it," and then proceeded with his work without further parley.

The remainder of the day was spent in an effort to get another location at Govan. They secured a five-acre tract on which stood a one-room log hut. Then the teachers made arrangements for a boarding place until this could be repaired, and returned to Hampton determined to move all their effects to Govan and try it out there despite the first disappointment. It happened on a rainy day in January that Mr. Wiggins drove a two-horse wagon into Hampton and took away the earnest teachers who had striven so hard to stay there and all their belongings over the long muddy road to Govan.

They arrived at their destination about eight o'clock at night, wearied from the twenty-mile drive over bad roads and pretty thoroughly drenched by the drizzling rain that had been falling well nigh the whole day through. Many of the teachers' books were spoiled on this trip—and yet when they reached Govan and drove up to the home where they had engaged quarters in advance, the lady of the house said she couldn't take them. As the rain was still falling they requested the privilege of backing the loaded wagon under a nearby shed until day. Having thus secured their household and personal effects in the exposure of an open shed, the undaunted school

builders sought shelter for themselves elsewhere. They found it in the home of Mr. W. R. Wroten, where they remained as boarders—four to the room, cooking, eating and sleeping until their own little one-room log hut was put in order and partitioned into two apartments; one to serve as a dormitory for teachers and students and the other as class rooms for all the subjects the school was then able to carry in its curriculum night or day, dining-room and kitchen and laundry, *et cetera.*

CHAPTER V

SEEKING A LOCATION

(Continued)

In frequent movings of this period, Miss Wright and her associates not only suffered much from exposure, but very often were forced to leave a part of their household things behind them. They left several important pieces of their meager furniture at Hampton; and as their outfit there was none too elaborate, it made independent house-keeping at Govan a problem of much seriousness. So the time spent under the hospitable roof of Mr. Wroten was a season of anxiety and prayer for food and raiment and a comfortable shelter under which to live. He gave many interesting accounts of how his family awoke many a morning to find these teachers engaged in their morning devotions. And what earnest pleading at the Altar of God for daily bread and help.

No time could be lost, because there was no definite support for the teachers, now four in number, having been joined only recently by Miss Anna Marthard. The Reverend Teacher of the village school was near the close of his school year. Nor could they hope to obtain his job (if indeed they still had that hope) until the following fall. They immediately organized a pay school with tuition at 10c a week. This was conducted during the day with such children as they could get in competition with

the free school and at night with older persons who still had a desire to learn to read and write. The enrollment ran about equal for the two divisions, eighteen to twenty in each. Miss Wright was constantly on the go. She canvassed the country, mostly afoot, for many miles in every direction soliciting aid. On one of these trips she visited Denmark and became much impressed with it as a possible location for an industrial school.

From this time forth, as if by Divine inspiration, Miss Wright talked and dreamed of Denmark. She had prayed for Divine guidance in her undertaking. And now it seemed to her that all the devious and rough paths she had traveled within the past four years of struggle and hardship led in one unerring direction, and that was to Denmark; and that every circumstance or person, whether for or against the unavailing efforts she had made to establish the school elsewhere, were alike entitled to the highest praise for the good she felt was sure to come to her efforts in the days just ahead. That it was the direct leading of the Holy Spirit she had not the least doubt, for her simple faith would admit none.

By this time they had moved into their own house, or rather into one end of the humble log hut which they were trying to acquire as the first and only building of the great industrial school to be. It is well to pause here and take an inventory of what would have developed into a Tuskegee had Elizabeth Evelyn Wright remained at Govan.

The village carpenter had run a rough board partition across the room from the side of the door

FIRST GIRLS' DORMITORY

CHARCOAL

farthest from the fireplace and made an opening for a door in the center of this partition. The partition only reached up to where the ceiling ought to have been and rested its uneven top against the one unbarked twisted poplar pole that crossed the room from plate to plate. A thin curtain covered the opening in the partition and the dormitory and class room of the new school were complete except furnishings and equipment. Besides the curtained door the dormitory had one window or hole in the wall, opened or closed by a twin board shutter swung on leather hinges. There was in it one bed, four trunks, one large and three small, a very small center table half way between the door and window and two shuck bottom chairs. Also a washstand—presumably a box covered with a piece of cloth—and on it a wash pan, stood in the corner opposite the bed, while in the next corner was a similar stand on which rested a mirror in an oval frame of wood. An oblong box standing upright against the wall served as a library. Besides there were a few pictures, conspicuous among them one of Booker T. Washington, and room for nothing else. Yet the arrangenemt showed care and skill.

The class room, which also served as a dining room and kitchen, had in it the only door of entrance to the building. This was low and narrow and admitted about as much light as came in through the fireplace whose dirt chimney ran out a short distance up the gable and was very wide. There was light from other sources, however, for both light and rain came in through the roof despite all efforts to make

the roof waterproof. A hard blowing rain would sometimes came down the short chimney and put the fire entirely out. A sawed block of wood served for steps at the door and students entered and sat upon undressed planks laid across boxes. There was a kitchen table which was used during school hours as a desk. There was no other equipment save a very small blackboard that stood on two very long legs against the wall facing the door.

In these lowly surroundings noble ambition lived and prospered. Miss Wright inspired her teachers with hope for better things, but five acres at Govan with no chance of adding more land as needed was not sufficient inducement to remain. She began talking Denmark to her teachers and friends and when it was determined that they would really make another change, all agreed that the local school committees had better be dispensed with, at least until some kind of transaction could be completed.

This was a time to take bearings and see just what kind of a world this child of simple faith had entered. She had failed in attempts to establish the school but she must not keep on failing. Every time the sails were set to catch the breeze some evil genius would turn the tide in the opposite direction. Was this blind fate working overtime to defeat a worthy enterprise, or was it the old story of going unto his own, "and His own received Him not?" Miss Wright had the quality of faith in God, and in man that it required to win. But as yet she believed only in the unmixed goodness of the race. To her way of thinking every man submerged in darkness would

naturally welcome the light. It had not occurred to her that a thousand things born in darkness could never live in the light and that these elements would work through every agency to preserve their dark abode. These elements are in our social and political life and hold on with terrible tenacity. It seems pathetic to see an ignorant man oppose his own enlightenment, and yet that is the startling revelation that brought our inexperienced teacher to believe not only in man's goodness, but also in his incurable tendency to evil. This was a distinct contribution to her future success. Henceforth her enthusiasm would be sobered by caution and her faith qualified by the lessons of experience.

CHAPTER VI

SEEKING A LOCATION

(Continued.)

One day late in February, 1897, Miss Wright left her humble abode at Govan and putting her feet in the road, as the saying goes, walked the eight miles between Govan and Denmark, bent upon making a thorough investigation of every opportunity the latter place offered for establishing an industrial school in accordance with her heart's desire, and like unto the pattern which lived in her mind. It was on this trip that she saw for the first time the twenty-acre tract on which the school was destined to have its beginning in Denmark. Through a friend she had the information that the title deeds to this tract of land had passed from the former owner and present occupant to Honorable S. G. Mayfield, a member of the State Senate from Denmark. His office was on the main street near the center of the village, on the second floor of a two-story building. It was reached by a wooden stairway running up from the ground on the outside of the building. A lawyer's shingle hung just above the street whence the stairway led.

Guided by this sign and on this same day, Miss Wright approached the office of the man, whose large heartedness would put an end to her wandering over the land in unavailing efforts to find a suitable location for her school. She rapped at the door and was promptly admitted. She found herself in the pres-

ence of a busy lawyer. He looked up from his desk engagement and beheld a very intelligent but poorly clad colored woman standing before him, who proceeded without hesitancy to introduce herself and her business. The Senator was perceptibly disappointed in her business, having his mind pre-engaged by clients of another kind. Only his innate courtesy prevented him from showing impatience. Miss Wright herself was tactful, speaking hastily and to the point. At the first mention of Booker T. Washington's name and school, the Senator seized this chance to end the interview. "You bring me a recommendation from Booker T. Washington," he said, "and I will see what can be done to help you."

There was a ray of hope at least. Miss Wright descended the stairway back to the street in a haze of confused thinking, of trembling doubt and hope striving to rise. Once back on the streets so void of friends, she looked up and uttered a prayer, and let fall a tear, and started on the weary jaunt that lay between her and Govan, whose circumscribed log hut contained the only bed that invited her to rest after so toilsome a day in the open. She took her dinner in a paper bag at a cross-roads store, and munched it slowly as she trudged along thinking and praying.

Of course she would write Mr. Washington at once, and there could be no doubt about the recommendation that would be forthcoming. But would this guarantee her the place and the start she was now over-anxious about? Or would it only lead again, as her other efforts had done, into impossible circumstances that must be abandoned? Would her dream of

building a school be only a dream at last? Surely the burden of suffering she had already borne was too great to end in failure. "And yet how can this frail body of mine keep up the struggle indefinitely?" Miss Wright had audibly spoken the thought and realized for the first time that she was several miles out from Denmark, nearing a point where two roads crossed. Thus absorbed in thought a few steps more might have carried her in the wrong direction so far as to be unable to reach home for the night. Just then the noise of a wagon, the rattling of chains, and a friendly voice from behind gave promise of a ride. It was a neighbor from Govan returning home from another direction. This was such a blessing as her tired feet many times received with joy during the four years she was tramping over Hampton, Colleton and Bamberg Counties trying to establish a school.

As soon as the recommendation from Mr. Washington was received, which was early in March, Miss Wright at once presented herself at the office of Senator Mayfield. Mr. Washington's letter was such a high compliment to the integrity, industry and ability of this young woman, that the Senator marvelled much at such strong words of commendation coming from one of acknowledged leadership and authority. For a few minutes his face was a puzzle because in his mind were conflicting thoughts and emotions. He felt it was his duty to do something to help this unusual client, and yet he felt as sincerely that what his client wanted to do was beyond her ability to accomplish. He frankly told her as much and offered to secure her a position as teacher at the

State College, Orangeburg, S. C., paying $75.00 a month the year 'round. Miss Wright declined the offer in these words, "I thank you sincerely, sir, for your kind offer to help me, but I am not seeking help for myself. I want to build an industrial school in which to train poor boys and girls of my race to live useful lives." Mr. Mayfield was much impressed by the noble stand taken by this young woman and although the interview ended with not more tangible results than an invitation to call-again, still, on the other hand, more had been accomplished towards establishing the school in Denmark than Mr. Mayfield suspected or Miss Wright dared to believe.

When the ambition of the young Tuskegee graduate was discussed in the home of Senator Mayfield, another individual became interested, and the Senator had encouragement in his budding desire to help Miss Wright to build the school. The third person was Mrs. Kennerly, his kindly disposed mother-in-law, who took the stand that Mary took at the marriage feast in Cana of Galilee, saying unto Miss Wright at all times, "Whatsoever He sayeth unto you, doeth it," or depend on it. Now, Mrs. Kennerly was one of those rare souls of pure American lineage, whose ideas of freedom and justice, like their ancestry, could be traced back to Pilgrim Fathers. The blood of family had remained pure through centuries of conglomerate mixing of American citizenship, while the love of fair play and a square deal for every individual in the race of life had survived the cruel institution of slavery and warmed her heart as of yore towards any and all who sought the elevation of

the masses. It is but natural that such a woman would be a friend to Miss Wright in her undertaking. Their first meeting sealed the bond of this friendship. And ever afterwards Mrs. Kennerly sought in every possible way to promote the success of the school, commending it to the good judgment of both the colored and white people of the community. As an indication of the value of her never-failing interest and assistance, and as a mark of appreciation on the part of the beneficiaries, the first building on the permanent school campus was named in her honor—Kennerly Hall.

On a cold day early in March, Miss Wright was again at the office of Senator Mayfield. She appeared so thinly clad for the season that the Senator was moved to sympathy, and took the liberty to caution her with regards to the danger to her health from exposure. At this meeting he agreed to sell her the twenty-acre tract of land in Sato for two thousand dollars, and promised to help her otherwise as much as he could. That promise of help started into reality Miss Wright's dream of founding a school; it put an end to her pitiful wanderings from place to place trying to select a permanent location; it set the first seal of tangible results upon four years of unprofitable toil, and gave Miss Wright the first real chance to justify the confidence of her friends. On the other hand that promise to help build and sustain a negro school, kept without wavering from then until now, no doubt cost the Senator the long and brilliant political career that was just opening up before him. He is a strong and talented man, a pre-

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ferment among his colleagues as well as his constituency. He was then in the midst of an ever-widening fame and growing popularity. This came somewhat into eclipse when it became known that he was aiding and abetting negro education by such close personal contact and interest as he has given Voorhees Industrial School from its very beginning. At a meeting of the Board of Trustees the Senator's great sacrifice on account of the school was thus commented upon:

> "Senator Mayfield, we are aware that you have suffered no small loss financially for the stand you have taken for the Voorhees School, and we are aware also that you have sacrificed high political honor from your constituents for the moral support you have given to Miss Wright and her work in Denmark." To which the Senator replied: "Gentlemen, I suffer no compunctions of conscience for what I have done, both for Miss Wright and her school, and I care nothing for the loss either financially or politically. If I had to do it all over again, I would make the same sacrifice, for I feel that I have helped a worthy cause and a most worthy woman."

Many people in all sections of our country as well as abroad will be surprised to know that the South, so widely advertised as being in the universal and unyielding grip of race hatred, has in it a liberal sprinkling of men like the Ex-Senator S. G. Mayfield, men who are large-hearted and fearless as such men usually are, disdaining in their larger conception of freedom to submit to the galling yoke of prejudice.

Men whose clear vision has enabled them to see that to pursue the ex-slave with hatred is to take his place in the shackles,—shackles, too, of more fearful consequences because self-imposed. Men whose ascendancy is guaranteed by the lifting hand extended to all beneath them in life's struggle.

Mr. Mayfield is regarded as an example of the kind of men that the South needs and must have if it would overcome the two greatest obstacles to its progress—ignorance and prejudice. These are twin foes of Democracy; cruel masters whose slaves are lured to self-destruction. From these the South must have a second emancipation, touching equally with its benefits both races and all classes of its citizens. Outside influences may aid, but the influence that will count for most in the final and complete liberation will be those set in motion by the South's own sons and daughters—the Mayfields and Kennerlys co-operating with the Booker T. Washingtons and Wrights, at personal sacrifice and in the face of all opposition.

The preliminary negotiations were conducted in keeping with the changed policy adopted by Miss Wright after the Govan failure, that in making future attempts to establish the school in any community whatsoever, first, to select a desirable site and close the bargain for its purchase before enlisting the general support of the people of the community more directly concerned. This was to avoid, and in this particular case did avoid, any complications persons of sinister motives might cause. The wisdom of this policy was soon to be vindicated. For when

Miss Wright attempted to enlist the support of her own people to build the school in Denmark, she aroused the most implacable and outspoken single foe to her school project that she had found anywhere. However, she had wisely secured a place on which to stand and beat down the opposition. Otherwise she might have been forced to leave Denmark as she had left McNeals and Hampton and Govan.

On the third Sunday in March Misses Wright, Dorsey and Davis, being present at the morning services, opened the campaign among the colored people at Rome Baptist Church. Misses Wright and Dorsey made speeches outlining their plan for building an industrial school in the community. The people received this intelligence with demonstrations of joy, because there was no school in Denmark at that time for colored children, the public school house having been burned several years before. A school committee was immediately appointed to make all necessary investigations and a careful survey of the situation and report its findings at a call meeting on Friday night of the same week.

The teachers dined that day at Mr. Joe Holman's and found a boarding place next door at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Bunch. The latter couple became very helpful friends to Miss Wright and her cause. In her reminiscence of this occasion the hostess said: "She moved around the road from Govan in a wagon when she came. She didn't have anything with her but her trunk and a little bedding and very few clothes in her trunk. We gave them a room to stay in. All of them stayed in one room. I

cooked for them sometimes and sometimes they cooked for themselves. They gave me $1 a piece a month for board. The three of them stayed with me at this rate for seven months and by that time they had purchased a piece of property down in Sato and they moved onto it."

CHAPTER VII

THE SCHOOL IN DENMARK

The long weary period of wandering from place to place, in search of a suitable location in which to establish an industrial school in the State of South Carolina for the poorer children of her race had come to an end at last and Misses Wright and Dorsey accepted the challenge that Denmark offered them. They did not wait to acquire a permanent home for the school, but began activities without further delay. The last interview with Senator Mayfield had given the needed encouragement. This took place toward the end of March. By the 14th of April they had secured a room up-stairs over an old store on the street corner near the railroad station in Old Denmark or Sato as it is now called. It was known as the Sontag House, being at that time out of repair and also not in use. It was here in a vacant room on the preceding date in the year 1897 Misses Wright and Dorsey met and organized the Denmark Industrial School with 14 pupils. They had neither bench nor bell, and as the house in which the public school had been taught had been recently burned together with its entire contents, there was no chance to borrow these two most necessary items of school furniture. A few chairs were secured from private homes and a generous neighbor also sent along her dinner bell to be used temporarily in calling the

children together. With this very meager borrowed equipment this new educational venture was fully launched.

Turning now to the projectors of this very unpromising scheme for a guarantee of their ability to make it succeed, and a situation is faced quite as discouraging as the other features just mentioned. Concerning this high moment, when the ambition of her life was about to be realized, Miss Wright herself made the following record:

> "I didn't have one penny, and I didn't know where the money was coming from to sustain such an undertaking as I had planned. I asked God to help me carry out my plan and a thought came to me to ask the churches in the community in which I worked to aid me. Going from place to place on Sunday, I told the people of my plans and they gave me ($200) two hundred dollars."

Starting out in this penniless way the project itself was purely a venture of faith. There was no visible means of support. The local Board of Education had made no promise of help and there was none forthcoming from the outside. To all questions as to how the promoters expected to get pay for their services, the following reply was made:

> "The work is young and means cannot be solicited for all the teachers to get salaries. So the two managers work for their board and now and then friends send them clothes."

But the real facts in the case seem to indicate that as yet there was no regularly organized way of getting their board. They boarded around among several

of the good families of the community who were friendly to their undertaking. Among the homes whose welcome and hospitality were freely used by the new teachers at this time were those of Mrs. Charlie Bunch, Mrs. Vance Parlor and Mrs. Pat Holman. However, the responsibility for their board was shared by the community generally. In a most generous manner the store-rooms, gardens and pantry of each patron of the school were laid under tribute to furnish them a wholesome bill of fare. Every day there was something to help out. The school children brought from their homes now and again a bunch of vegetables, a chicken, a half-dozen eggs, a piece of bacon or ham, a cup of lard, a pound of butter, a bucket of milk or a jar of fruit, etc.

Miss Dorsey was left in charge of the school while Miss Wright spent the greater part of her time traveling among the churches of the three adjoining counties in an effort to interest the people in the school and at the same time raising funds to purchase land on which to build it. Her itinerary at this time shows how great was her capacity for hardships and endurance.

Writing about Miss Wright, during this period, Miss Dorsey said, "Every Sunday she was gone to one church or another, soliciting means to pay for the place and establish the work that was dear to her heart, and which afterwards would make her name immortal. Sometimes she would be gone two weeks, and at these times she would go from church to church, miles apart, to fill appointments made with the people. Sometimes the distance was covered on

foot, at other times some means of conveyance was used. This was often a slow old mule and a road cart with a driver equally as slow as the mule. One can see how such a life would be exposed to all conditions of the weather and to the inconveniences and dangers of poorly kept country roads. Miss Wright was in very poor health, nevertheless she continued the work."

Returning to Denmark at irregular intervals, she had finally reached an agreement with Senator Mayfield to sell the school a twenty-acre tract of land lying wholly within the village and but a short distance from where the school was being conducted. This was in July, 1897. The terms of the sale being fully settled upon, she set out with much enthusism to raise the two hundred dollars required as the first payment before she could assume control of the property. This is the amount referred to in the quotation given above. The following is a list of the churches with the amounts each gave to give the first tinge of reality to what had hitherto been but a dream:

Unorganized Church	$ .50	Evergreen	$ 4.66
Gethsemane	2.26	Ashley Union	5.00
Pilgrim Ford	2.30	Deep Creek	1.60
McCuan Branch	5.41	Estelle	.65
Mt. Nebo	1.48	Almeda	1.37
Ashley Chapel	2.25	Bell's Club, No. 1	1.50
Thankful Branch Union	1.00	Macedonia Union	2.10
Jackson Branch	6.62	Trinity	1.10
Long Branch	1.80	Rev. Kennedy's Union	1.75
Dry Swamp School	5.32	Raysor's Mills	1.35
Hickory Hill	1.38	Pilgrim Rest	3.67
Bethelehem	.67	Galilee	6.16
Happy Hope	1.00	Zion	.67
Lemon Pond	1.36	Oak Grove	1.36
Crocketville People	1.20	Ebenezer	4.18
Union	4.55	Ephesus	4.00

New Hope	4.18	Good-Will	3.38
Allen Chapel	1.12	St. James	.38
Mt. Calvary	5.82	Tabernacle	5.30
Second Mt. Olive	5.75	Davis Chapel	2.50
Galilee	3.10	Camp Meeting Buck Head	5.67
Bethlehem Association	4.00	Mt. Zion	6.32
Three Mile Creek	3.00	Willow Swamp	3.75
Capernaum	4.97	Rome	2.00
Sunshine	2.00	Oakley Springs	1.00
Bushy Pond	2.45	Springfield	1.57
Canaan	2.21	Mt. Olive Association	2.10
Hovely Hill	1.77	St. James	2.06
Sandy Run	2.00	Bethel	.30
Jericho	1.50	Smyrna	4.50
Church at Salley	4.20	Brown's Chapel	2.30
Church at Elko	5.20	Macedonia	3.40
Nazarene Association	2.51	Mt. Olive	2.00

As impossible as this accomplishment may seem, Miss Wright had secured the required amount by the free-will offerings of the people given in small sums through the churches as indicated above by the first of September. On the 6th day she made the payment and proceeded at once to take charge of the property and put the three houses in readiness for the opening of the fall school term. For the twenty acres of land on which stood a two-story dwelling, a three-room shanty which was turned into a school house and another four-room shanty she stipulated to pay $2,000.

And now she was in possession and ready for the first regular session of the Denmark Industrial School for colored youth. Miss Lula J. Davis, who had been with Misses Wright and Dorsey in the school at Hampton, returned now to join the work again and brought with her a third teacher, Mr. J. Merchant, himself also a graduate of Tuskegee. In October the school opened with fourteen boarders and enough

village children to push the enrollment up to 236 for the first term. About this time Miss Wright wrote thus to one of her friends:

"I do wish you could visit the work and see how crowded we are. Our dining hall is entirely too small and no one can eat in it with comfort. We have only one room for the girls, six in number and two more expected soon, and two teachers have to sleep in it and have to do all the ironing in it also. The boys have only one room and there are six of them. Our school is entirely too small for the number of students, is very dilapidated and is liable to collapse at any time. We have so many students that we do not know what we will do with them and being in the school house is like being out of doors."

During the early part of this school year, Miss Wright made her first trip North in search of friends for the school. It was on this trip that she met with some very hard experiences. She often related how during her first canvass in the city of Philadelphia she had nowhere to stay and how, after a weary and profitless search all day, among the great, strange looking mansions of the rich, she returned with tired feet, the pain of disappointment in her heart and eyes filled with tears that she could not control, to the railroad station for the night's rest on the friendly benches.

It is impossible to relate one after another such trying experiences from the records of this young woman's early efforts to build her school, until a long list is compiled; but why extend it when one is enough to show the metal of her character and the

quality of her determination. When she sailed forth from her station lodging the next morning the world knew nothing of the tears of the night but was impressed by the brighter light in the eye, the firmer step, the undaunted spirit. She was on the road to success.

In her first annual report to the friends of the school, Miss Wright made the following record:

"In 1894, I came to South Carolina and located in Hampton County. After visiting three of the most needy counties in the southern part of the State and seeing the condition of my race in the rural districts, and as I wanted to concentrate my efforts to the uplifting of the masses and not to individuals, I moved the school to Denmark where many thousands of my people could be reached. The object of the school is to give the pupils a practical education and help the parent to better their condition along all lines.

"During this school year we have had an enrollment of 236 students and could have had more if accommodations could have been gotten. On account of financial depression, our industrial work is not what it should be. The girls who board are taught cooking, laundering and housekeeping. In the future we hope to have other branches of industry. I have purchased twenty acres of land and three buildings for the school; and have paid $752 on the property and still owe $1,080. A small farm is being cultivated. The school owns seven hives of bees and a lot of poultry.

"At present there are no trustees but as soon as the land is paid for it will be put under a board of

trustees. The school is strictly undenominational and is supported by friends with the exception of $97.50 a year from the county. The boarding students are required to attend religious services each Sunday out in town.

"The school is in need of money to finish paying for the land and to put up a building which is very much needed by the next school term. The white people are on friendly terms with the school. Senator S. G. Mayfield has shown the deepest interest. He is always approachable and never too busy to give advice concerning the work. His interest is aroused at the first word."

The following are the amounts given by friends for the support of the school for the first year:

Friends and amounts from the State of South Carolina:

Senator S. G. Mayfield	$100.00
Mr. Jackson Wiggins	51.60
Mr. H. G. Candee	
Miss S. Copling	.50
Rev. J. C. Smith	1.80
Mr. Simon McTeer	.25
Miss Sarah McTeer	.25
Mr. Thomas Thomas	.10
A friend	.25
Mr. R. E. Causey	1.00
Mr. Causey	.50
Mr. M. Clhen	1.00
Messrs. Hyers and Anderson	.75
Mr. Jennings	1.00
Mr. H. E. Mole	1.00

Mr. Peter Bowman	1.00
Mr. J. McMillan	.50
Mr. Alexander McMillan	.50
Mr. I. Lany	.10
Rev. Johnson	.10
Mr. Bass McMillan	.10
Mary and Henry Williams	.30
Mr. Allen Frampton	1.00
Mr. S. P. Porter	.25
Miss Ada Webb	.25
Mr. J. D. Mims	.25
Mr. Joseph Orven	.25
Miss Dorsey	.40
Cash from students	37.80
Cash from public	97.50
Students' free-will offering	20.00
Money from the farm	40.00
Miss Phillips	
Mr. Delough	1.00
Mr. Jones	.60
A friend	.25
Total	$362.15

Friends outside the State:

Miss Olivia E. P. Stokes, N. Y.	$325.00
Miss Stokes' friend, N. Y.	100.00
Dr. J. H. Kellogg, Mich.	5.00
Friends of Rockland, Mass.	5.00
Mr. Geo. R. Bradford, Mass.	50.00
Miss M. Torrey, Vt.	2.00
Miss Hattie Brabham, Pa.	1.00
Miss E. J. Smith, Mass.	4.24

Mrs. Wheldon, Mass	1.00
Miss Sarah Parker, Mass	9.00
Miss Clara Newcomb, Mich	1.00
Mrs. W. E. Hutt, Ill	3.00
Mr. Brockett, Mich	.25
Mr. McCraw, Ohio	1.50
Friends of Ohio	27.08
Mrs. A. S. Steele, Tenn	14.00
Mrs. Fitch, Mich	2.00
Mr. H. G. Candee, Mass	10.00
Friends of Lynn, Mass	1.40
Miss Phillips, Mich	5.00
Total	$568.47

The commencement exercises were held under a bush harbor, improvised on the grounds for the occasion. Large crowds from the surrounding country attended and much interest was manifested in the activities of the school. The impression went abroad that the venture was succeeding and immediately symptoms of opposition from unexpected quarters began to show themselves. However, these were the faint beginning of a storm that would ere long break in wild fury against the growing influences of the work. Now, it was just a casual question asked with more or less of anxiety themselves by the pastor and deacons of the local church, as to the church affiliation of these two stranger teachers in their midst. Are their souls secure against eternal damnation? Everybody shook his head, for nobody knew and the teachers themselves were silent on the matter considered

so vital to the spiritual welfare of the children entrusted to their care. Madam Rumor took over the case and conducted consultations in private for fully another year. Meantime the teachers kept busy at their tasks and the work continued to prosper.

During the next year Miss Wright was kept mostly at the school trying to adjust the large enrollment to the poor accommodation and because of the low state of her health. Among the instructors, Mr. Merchant did not return and Mr. Mahone came to take his place. Miss Davis remained only a part of the school term. The following were selected and organized as the first Board of Trustees:

Hon. S. G. Mayfield,.....Denmark, S. C.
Geo. W. Kelley, Esq.,.....Rockland, Mass.
Rev. M. W. Gilbert, D.D.,.....Columbia, S. C.
Rev. R. C. Bedford,.....Beloit, Wis.
Miss Olivia E. P. Stokes,.....New York
Miss Emily Howland,.....Sherwood, N. Y.
Miss Elizabeth E. Wright,.....Denmark, S. C.
Rev. Richard Guess,.....Denmark, S. C.
Jacob Moorer, Esq.,.....Orangeburg, S. C.
Mrs. A. S. Steele,.....Chattanooga, Tenn.
Dr. J. H. Kellogg,.....Battle Creek, Mich.

The amount received from friends to carry on the work this year dropped considerably below the total of the previous year. The donors were almost exclusively Northern friends. The entire receipts from all sources amounted to only $711.98.

The second annual report, exclusive of financial details, is added for a better view of the real status of the school during the second year of its history:

"The school is now in its infancy and we are trying to lay a good foundation at the beginning. Each year we put forth every effort to make it grow in power, so the influence for good may be felt in the rural districts in which we labor for the Master.

"This has been a very successful year with us, and we have much for which to be thankful.

"This view has been kept in mind, to reach the masses and we work in the homes as well as in the school rooms. We feel that it is our duty to work for the ennobling of our race, and as they rise to a higher standard of citizenship and become stronger morally, physically and intellectually, they will be a blessing to American civilization instead of a curse, and other races will be helped indirectly by them.

"We see a marked improvement each year in the students, religiously and morally. Ever since the inception of the school, this has been borne in mind to see after the heart, hand and head of the students.

"A mothers' meeting is held twice a month on the school grounds and also a meeting once a month with the men, and we feel that some of the seeds which have been sown will spring up soon for good. The men are advised to purchase homes, to quit the mortgage system and plant more food supplies. The women are given talks on how to bring up their boys and girls to value their virtue, and to teach them to live useful and unselfish lives.

"Our attendance has been very much larger this year than last. We have an enrollment of two hundred and seventy students and if accommodations could have been gotten, we would have had more.

SHOWING MULES GIVEN BY A FRIEND

BOYS IN CARPENTER SHOP

We could only take seven to board on the grounds, as we have only one building which can be used for dormitories. The school house is very dilapidated and is entirely too small for the number of students. A great many have had to stand up all day, as we have not sufficient desks for them, nor room for them, and those, the little ones, that do not stand take seats down on the floor. It is very amusing to see them sitting around on the floor, but at the same time one cannot help from sympathizing with them.

"We are very much in need of a building. Timber has been given by Senator S. G. Mayfield to be sawed into lumber to erect a building, but the building can not be erected until money can be raised for purchasing other necessary material. We have paid all the remainder of the required sum due on the property save ($530) five hundred and thirty dollars. Notwithstanding this, the man from whom we purchased has given the deeds and the property has been turned over to the board of ten trustees and later three more will be added to the list. An application has been sent in for incorporation which we trust will be granted.

"The twenty acres of land have no woodland whatever on it and we are in need of a tract of land in the country on which the school can get wood. Senator Mayfield kindly furnished the wood this term and we would have suffered if it had not been for his kindness.

"The school is strictly undemoninational and is supported by charitably disposed friends, save $25.60 which comes from the county. The students attend

services at the different churches in town. It is with regret that our industrial work is not what it would or should be. As soon as we can get more friends interested in the work, we hope to have a building in which the various industries may be taught, and also the required implements and material by which effective work may be done.

"The work on the little farm so far has been done by the students. The crops are not in a prosperous condition, which consists of such plants as corn, potatoes, peas, rice, peanuts, sugar cane and vegetables. We are in need of farming implements, and also a horse or mule. The school has a horse partly in charge this year for its food. It would be gratifying to have one of its own.

"It is very difficult for the humble writer to raise funds to carry the work on. Heretofore I have been visiting the churches in the counties in which I labor and the people would give small sums toward the work, but this year it was impossible for me to do so, as we had so many students; I had to remain on the grounds and do the work.

"If five thousand seven hundred and seventy dollars ($5,770.00) could be solicited, I am sure that amount would put the work just where I would like it to be. Then the five hundred and thirty which is due on the property could be settled, a tract of land in the country could be purchased, a building erected, a horse and wagon, which are so much needed, could be purchased, and a great many other things which are essential to the work."

Miss Wright was a very active woman; to be alive,

for her, meant doing something. And so this year when she was kept off the road, she set out to bring the school into more vital touch with the community life. She organized a Mothers' Club which started out holding two meetings a month, and a Men's meeting held once a month. In these meetings the teacher assumed the role of counsellor and adviser in the most delicate business and domestic affairs of her patrons. They marvelled at her ability to go so directly to the heart of their problems. It was a new feature of community leadership among negroes. And the response, though hesitating at first, came after a while with full and hearty accord. But "teaching the people" has been a capital offense in the eyes of hereditary leaders and those who fortify themselves against all progress with worn out dogmas and creeds.

It has been whispered around, that these women either had none at all, or a new kind of religion. Their aggressive leadership was hastening matters rapidly to a climax. The last straw was placed on the camel's back when Miss Wright approached Pastor Rice for the privilege of using the church for the closing exercises of her school. Without displaying any of the bitter partisanship he felt, he promised to take the matter up with the deacons of his church and make her an early reply. It would seem that the widest divergence of opinions as to the proper attitude to assume towards the teachers and their work existed among these churchmen. The use of the church, however, was denied them. In order to curb the trend of favorable opinion that was growing

stronger every day, Rev. Rice thought it was his plain duty to publicly warn the people as to the exact situation. Sunday night at the close of the preaching service he proceeded thus to solemnly discharge the obligation:

"Do you know who Miss Wright is?" he asked with a glow of dramatic fervor lighting his countenance and his eye. Here he paused with his eyes fixed on some person in the rear of the church. A few moments passed and he continued, "If there is anybody in the house who is a rank sinner without church responsibility, let him stand up." Whereat one Amos Brown, who was known in the community as a very wicked man, scrambled to his feet. Pointing to him with the utmost disdain in his manner and in his voice, the pastor said, "This is what I want to tell you; just like Amos Brown is not a member of any church in the world, I style Miss Wright along with him. Brown is liable to do anything; so I style Miss Wright." For a while there was silence as if the audience was stunned as much by the suddenness of the attack as by its manifest injustice. The pastor seized this opportunity to dismiss his people. On the outside in the church yard groups of folks stood long in spirited contention, which frequently became loud and angry. Neither one of the teachers was present; thus they were spared the embarrassment of the first direct frontal attack.

Miss Dorsey had been teaching in the Sunday School and acting as organist. Rev. Rice being now determined to follow his own lead and swing matters back to normal in his church and community, met

with the Sunday School Board and influenced that organization to pass a resolution dispensing with her services.

The finances of the school were considerably short for the year, and Miss Wright had secured a number of pledges from the people of the community to be paid at a certain time to help close out the year's work without debt. The meeting had been called to take place at the church and the time was drawing nigh when this trouble arose. The outlook was rather dark, but our teacher had never retreated from any situation and even now she would not draw back. She would meet the enemy on his own ground unless he took steps to prevent the meeting himself.

Rumor now was wilder than ever, now charging the teachers with having no religion at all and again charging them with having a new kind of religion by which they were plotting to overthrow the established church. As evidence of this last fact it was argued that they do not observe the Christian Sabbath but keep Saturday instead.

To readers at a distance in time and space, this may not appear to be a very serious matter. The relating of the circumstances may even evoke laughter on the part of some. But the question of denominational leaning has always been a bitter one in negro church history. Among the victims of this delusion have been many mighty men of faith and courage. It has been the moral strabismus blinding the way of our people in their upward climb. Sad to relate, but in many dark places of this Southland, as well as in some centers of greater light and learn-

ing, this issue has frequently overshadowed the Cross. It has been a long struggle of conflicting creeds. Men have enlisted on the one side or the other for offensive and defensive warfare among themselves while the weightier matters of the law and Gospel have been neglected. Nor is it altogether an issue of the past. It looms up here and there at unexpected times and places; and still wields its sinister influence among the principalities and powers in the Kingdom of righteousness. If at this day an interchurch world movement is halted and blocked in its effort to co-ordinate the Christian forces for world-redemption, the disturbing cause may be traced down to the festering roots of denominational pride.

Being of a highly sensitive nature, Miss Wright felt more keenly than did Miss Dorsey the fight that was being waged against her school. She had no doubt as to the eventual outcome. It was the present inconvenience to her youthful undertaking that annoyed her soul. Besides, the year had been a rather lean and strenuous one, and health poor. And so, in a way, she was glad when the evening came and all the curious for miles around, besides those who were deeply concerned, had turned out at an unusually early hour to see the whole case through. Although the meeting was nominally a school meeting, Rev. Rice was present and took charge. He was out in the open now and fought straight from the shoulder. His opening remarks were another direct attack, although from a little different angle.

"You men," he began, "don't know what you are doing. You are giving your money to somebody

you know nothing about. You don't even know what kind of school these women are going to build. This Miss Wright is a Seven Day Adventist, they don't claim any denomination at all. Instead of observing our Sabbath they have it on Thursday." At this juncture the speaker was interrupted by Miss Dorsey who had gotten the floor and was demanding to be heard.

"The accusation you bring against Miss Wright is false," she fired straight across the audience from the rear. "I am the only Seven Day Adventist in the crowd, and I am here to tell you tonight, I am here to live a Seven Day Adventist, and I shall die a Seven Day Adventist, and rise up in heaven the same." This shot was so unexpected that the preacher for the moment stood dazed, and then limply concluded: "This is just why our race is mixed up like it is, because you can't tell them anything."

Miss Wright attempted to get the floor, but was restrained by Miss Dorsey, who feared her companion's weakness for tears might lead the enemy to think he had the advantage. Others rose and made speeches but said nothing. Miss Dorsey's speech seemed to have undermined all their conclusions. No one knew just what attitude to assume towards such a frank acknowledgment. The whole situation now revolved around the question: What is a Seven Day Adventist? In the resultant confusion, Pastor Rice had at least postponed the day of final decision, and defeated the collection of pledges for that evening.

The Rev. Mr. Rice remained an implacable foe of Miss Wright and her school for several years, and only after his health had broken down and he was brought face to face with his own record of good and evil, did he acknowledge his fault. Once only did he visit the school as a friend. The physical and mental energy that he had used to fight the school was about exhausted and he leaned for support upon a crutch, not far from the other side. The chool was then in a flourishing condition with brightest prospects ahead.

Notwithstanding the large number of friends who stood by the teachers in this local fight, the second school closing exercises were held under a bush arbor improvised for the occasion. Echoes of this opposition spread out among the churches of the surrounding country and many of them closed their doors against Miss Wright. She was still making periodic trips out among the churches in the interest of the school, and now a chance to speak was often denied her. At times she took such slights especially hard, carrying her tears of disappointment far into the week's work at the school.

When she had organized the work for the next school year by adding two young ladies from Kentucky to the teaching force, she again went North in search of friends. The new teachers were Misses V. Pollard and R. Lalor.

The following is a summary of conditions at the school at the end of the third year's work, as embodied in the Principal's report for that year:

"Each year the school is growing larger and we see

and feel the necessity of putting forth every effort to make the influence of it felt in the rural districts in which we labor, where the negroes outnumber the whites two to one, and where there are no schools which run over four months, and where no industries are taught whatever.

"This has been a very encouraging year. God has certainly been leading us, and has worked upon the hearts of men and women, and we who have been working in His vineyard to accomplish some good in this community, have been greatly blessed, and have received many gifts from those whom He has blessed with this world's goods.

"This view is always kept in mind, to try to reach the masses and to provide such an education for them which will most benefit them for the duties of life. We feel that to accomplish the most good, industrial training along with an academic course should be given, and as we go from locality to locality and see the condition of things, we feel it is our duty to advise our people and try to show them a better way of living, and as the youth of to-day will soon be the men and shall take our places, therefore the school is trying to provide for them a thorough mental and religious training.

"Each day we are realizing more fully that a high education is for the few and industrial training for the masses.

"Our attendance has been very large this term. We had an enrollment of two hundred and seventy-five students. Fifteen boarded on the grounds and as we could not accommodate any more, homes had to

be gotten out in town with families for sixteen from adjacent towns, which we regretted, for they could not get the desired instruction in tidiness and other domestic training, which they so much needed.

"Each year we try to make some improvements along the industrial line. Sewing has been taught to all the girls and simple treatment of the sick to the larger ones; housekeeping, cooking and laundering to those who board. The boys are taught farming and they do all the work on the little farm. The crops last year turned out well. We realized one hundred and six bushels of corn, three hundred and sixty-five bundles of fodder, nineteen gallons of syrup, a barrel of rice and sufficient vegetables to run the school. The students are not lazy and are willing to become self-supporting. Military science is taught to the boys each day. It helps them to walk erect and to keep their person neat and to appear in school and on the school grounds in perfect order.

"Some valuable donations have been received this term. A horse and wagon for the farm, a sewing machine, material for the sewing class and a cooking range for the boarding department; and we have also received a great number of small gifts, which have amounted to a goodly sum.

"If five thousand and seven hundred and seventy dollars could be solicited, I am sure that amount would put the work on a good foundation. We still owe five hundred and thirty dollars on the school property, which ought to be paid by October 1st, 1900. We stand in need of buildings. Our school

house is fast falling to decay and is likely to collapse at any time, and to help the children as they should board on the grounds, but at present we cannot accommodate all who want to enter, as we have no dormitories.

"Parents are able to give their children only their time (some cannot give that) and there are so many who are not actually able to pay board and they want to enter school and work their way through, and if money could be solicited to purchase a large tract of land a little distance in the country, such students would have an opportunity of earning their education. They could work during the day and attend night school, and as there is not a school in South Carolina run on said plan, I think it would be such a help to the people of this State. We are anxious to have a school on a small scale similar to Tuskegee. It is our desire for the night school to be as well arranged as the day school."

CHAPTER VIII

A HOME, A FRIEND, AND A NAME

In purchasing the orginal school site of twenty acres in East Denmark, Miss Wright did not do so with the idea that this would be a permanent location for her school. The kind of school she planned in her mind required more land and there was no chance of getting that in the immediate neighborhood. She was constantly on the lookout for a place more nearly in keeping with her ideal. Such a place was found a short distance out of the village, and the owner, Dr. S. D. M. Guess, had consented to sell the two hundred and eighty acre tract for three thousand dollars. Of this particular place it was said: "After careful search covering a long period of time, this was deemed the most desirable of all locations available."

At the first annual meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Denmark Industrial School, which was held in the Teachers' Home at 2:00 p. m., March 20, 1901, instead of considering much needed repairs on the present school buildings, the center of interest had shifted to the subject of another location. The following is taken from the minutes of that meeting:

"At this point an extended and interesting discussion took place on the advisability of a change of location of the school. Senator Mayfield felt that in its present location the school could be only local

in its work. Whereas because of the large colored population here it needed to reach out and cover a much larger territory. This view was shared by all present and the discussion terminated in a motion by Rev. M. W. Gilbert: That Miss Wright proceed to purchase the Dr. Guess tract, on condition that she can dispose of the present site to advantage and raise the balance of the money necessary to complete the payments."

Mr. Menafee writes: "I entered the work here as a stenographer and bookkeeper. I was only here three months before the Board elected me as Treasurer. Prior to my arrival Miss Wright had made two or three trips North soliciting means, and had been quite successful in making a good many friends for the work. She had heard of Mr. Ralph Voorhees in some way and conceived the idea that he was a rich man and had been writing him, but he had made no reply. She asked me to write him, which I did. I wrote him three times, and in our last letter we outlined very carefully the most urgent needs that must be met in order to put the present school plant in running shape, and in a few weeks we received the following reply:

'Clinton, N. J., Feb. 15, 1901.

'Miss Wright:

'My dear Madam:

'Your unanswered letter lies open before me. I wish to ask a few questions concerning your noble work in trying to elevate the colored children and youth of Denmark and vicinity; thus preparing them for a better manhood and womanhood than other-

wise they might attain. You state in your letter that you need a new school house, which will cost $1,000; also the dwelling house needs $300 for proper repairs and about $200 to furnish the same, and that all you have in hand to do this work with is $200. Have you increased this amount any since last writing? When does your school year end and what will be the deficiency at that date including the above improvements? If you had the money in hand would you begin these improvements before the summer vacation? Have you a good man to superintend the work; one of judgment and push and who will make it his business to see the money is judiciously and economically expended? I feel interested in your school and think if you will explain everything satisfactorily I will help you at least to some extent.

'Please write me about your teachers, also about the scholars, their ages, their capacities and what progress they have thus far made; whether you are much encouraged in the work? I would be glad to hear of any other suggestion in connection with the school that you may see fit to offer.

'Yours very truly,

'Ralph Voorhees.' ''

Miss Wright did have another suggestion that she was real anxious to make, and that was concerning the purchase of the Guess tract of land as a permanent location for the school. Instead of attempting to explain the situation by correspondence, Miss Wright decided that she had better go and see him personally. She at once notified Mr. Voorhees of

her intention to go North in April and received a cordial invitation to call and see him. When she called she was given ten minutes in which to state her case. At the end of those ten minutes her case had become so interesting that the time was extended. She was even offered entertainment for the night which she gladly accepted. It might be that after listening to the story of her life that evening in his drawing room, and observing how frail her body was even at that time, he concluded that what she wanted to do was entirely beyond her powers of physical endurance; and as it has been necessary for Judge George W. Kelley, of Rockland, Mass., to relieve her of the drudgery of physical toil in order to complete her preparation for the work, it would now be necessary for someone to assume a large part of her present responsibilities in order that her small store of physical energy might be conserved with which to do the work. And as he meditated, the spirit of God that is in man rose up and charged, "Thou art the man."

Then, in order that she might not fail, he accepted as his own the full program outlined for her life's work; and with a double portion of the spirit of unselfish service, he rose in his own soul to the high level of her vision and shared the quality of her inspiration and enthusiasm for the work. Thenceforth the two had one aim and worked together to accomplish it. In fact he entered into all her plans, hopes and aspirations with devotion rare in the history of Christian philanthropy. She had won the confidence of her new patron, i. e.; she had succeeded in

getting him to believe in her absolute integrity of character and honesty of purpose. It is not only because he was a large and constant giver towards the various enterprises of Miss Wright's new industrial school, that set him apart among its hundreds of supporters, but because he so completely yielded his own spirit in helping to carry the inevitable burdens of the work. He helped to plan its course of progress and cheerfully accepted an equal share of responsibility for its success or failure. Therefore his concern was not merely in giving to put through certain definite enterprises, but he had a deeper and more earnest concern about their practical working in the general scheme. Miss Wright and Mr. Voorhees were indeed co-workers in building the Voorhees Industrial School, and it is providential that they were brought together in this common enterprise. Their meeting was certainly opportune. Without such close personal interest and co-operation he gave her in the work from now on she might not have been able to realize her dream. She was even then on the verge of a physical breakdown.

Mr. Ralph Voorhees and Mrs. Elizabeth H. Voorhees, his beloved companion, maintained the same attitude towards Miss Wright and the school. What has been said for him could be repeated word for word of her. Their thought life and heart life were blended in such perfect companionship that it were hardly possible to tell which one took the lead in a matter of this nature. Since his death Mrs. Voorhees has kept the school's interest near to her heart, and

MR. RALPH VOORHEES

in every instance has done for it what she thought he would have done if present.

When Miss Wright left the Voorhees home the next morning she left with the authority to make all necessary arrangements to purchase the desired place. A check to cover the purchase price of three thousand dollars would be forwarded in due time. She had reached one of those high spots that come often in every life of high endeavor and which bears such remarkable similarity to a day of falling weather, when suddenly through a rift in the cloud the sunshine comes to charm away the gloom with the rainbow promise of fairer days ahead. Her joy was indescribable and was thus briefly expressed in a telegram to Mr. Menafee:

"I have received news from heaven. Returning soon."—Lizzie Wright.

Within a few days Miss Wright was again in Denmark and told of her success amid the general rejoicing of the school family. A praise service in gratitude to God for the new door that was about to be opened to them was held in the dilapidated Teachers' Home and all plans for repairs were finally abandoned. She at once consulted Senator Mayfield about buying the place, giving him to understand that the money to pay for it had been promised already and he took the matter up with Dr. Guess, who refused to sell according to his previous agreement with Miss Wright. This cast a gloom over the situation and for the time being our teacher was again at sea. Of course she did not know whether this meant the loss of the money to pay for the place

or whether it would be available to purchase some other site. In her own confused state of mind she wrote Mr. Voorhees and received the following very encouraging reply to her letter:

"Clinton, N. J., June 22, 1901

"My Dear Miss Wright:

"Your letter just received. I have been waiting a few days to hear of your final determination in purchasing a site for your new 'Industrial School.' In your letter you seem to be all at sea about the matter. In my last letter I promised you that just as soon as Mr. Guess was ready to deed you the 280 acres of land I would place a check in your hands to pay for the same. Now there seems to be some equivocation on his part about the transfer of the property. Perhaps he thinks that you cannot fulfill your part of the contract in delivering the money. Therefore I am sending you my check for that amount made payable to your Treasurer.

"On the first of July take Mr. Mayfield with you and proffer the check to Mr. Guess in his presence and demand a deed for the property which you purchased of him some time previous (stating the time). If he demurs, then appeal to his conscience, then to his veracity, then to his honesty; if these fail then tell him the law will have to take its course. Tell him that upon his promise and your representation you secured a subscription of Three Thousand Dollars ($3,000) which was to be used especially for the purchase of this tract of land, and that the check is now in your hands to pay for it, and that if it is not used for that purpose you

may lose the whole of it. I hope Mr. Guess will be reasonable and honest and you will get the property all right. In the meantime if you do not, then hold the check in custody until further orders.

"If all fails with Mr. Guess, I would suggest that you call your trustees together and select the very next best site available for the least possible money. Do not be too hasty in deciding, but scour the country and take in consideration every tract that is offered and weigh the matter well before purchasing. REMEMBER THAT THIS LAND AND THESE BUILDINGS YOU ARE ABOUT TO ERECT IS TO BE THE HOME OF THE INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL FOR YEARS TO COME, and at the beginning it will not do to make any mistake.

"Hoping everything will turn out successfully, I remain,

"Yours very truly,

"Ralph Voorhees."

Towards mid-summer Miss Wright found her health rapidly giving way beneath the load of cares and acted upon the advice of her friends to go to a sanitarium for rest and medical attention, by going to Battle Creek Sanitarium where she spent most of the month of July. Late in August she was back at her desk much improved in health, and arranging for a special meeting of the Trustees of the Denmark Industrial School, "To consider the matter of a purchase of a site on which to locate the school." This was called to meet at the Teachers' Home at 5:00 p. m., September 16th, 1901. Meantime Dr. Guess had agreed to sell the place at the advanced

price of $4,500. The final decision of the Trustees was encouched in a motion by R. C. Bedford, that such steps be taken as may be necessary to complete the purchase of the Dr. Guess place for the $4,500 required, inasmuch as after careful search, covering a long period of time, this was deemed the most desirable of all locations available. Miss Wright immediately communicated this decision of the Trustees to Mr. Voorhees. He as quickly replied with another check covering the $1,500 balance with the request that the deal be closed at once. He had also included an extra $500 to be used in the construction of the first building on the new school grounds.

Things were moving rapidly now. By May "Kennerly Hall," the first building on the new campus, was near enough completed to be used. It was here that the second annual meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Denmark Industrial School was held, 10:30 a. m., May 14, 1902. The land had been surveyed by R. C. Mixon and a plat of same furnished. The deed had been made out to the Trustees, properly recorded, and turned over to them. A motion prevailed to change the name of the school to the Voorhees Industrial School, in honor of Mr. Ralph Voorhees, of Clinton, N. J.; whereupon Senator Mayfield moved that the proper action be taken in order to make the change legal.

MARTIN A. MENAFEE, Treasurer

CHAPTER IX

SUCCESS AND MARRIAGE

While the deed to the newly acquired tract of land was being arranged, plans for the first school building were proceeding with all possible speed. The plans were drawn by Mr. W. S. Pittman, a Tuskegee architect. Mr. John Draper was given the contract for construction. In the spring of 1902 the school was moved out on the present location. The female teachers and girls were temporarily domiciled in one of the three or four old buildings which were found on the place. On July 4th of the same year this building was destroyed by fire, and the occupants moved into the academic building which was still in the course of construction.

Mr. Menafee, Treasurer, and Mr. E. D. Jenkins, Farm Manager, the only men connected with the school at that time, roomed together in another old shanty. Mr. Jenkins was a recent graduate of Tuskegee, who had come out the year before to take charge of the 20 acre farm of the Denmark Industrial School. It now devolved upon him to develop the larger agricultural possibilities of the new location. How well he managed this new trust will appear as the record proceeds.

The Trustees had their first meeting on the new school grounds in May, and Miss Wright's report to them contained the following account of the year's work:

"In my last report I stated we needed a farm and in this one, I am very glad to say, the school is in possession of three hundred acres of land, 280 acres of which were donated this term by Mr. Ralph Voorhees, of New Jersey. He gave $5,000; $4,500 to purchase the land and $500 towards the erection of our large school building which we so much need and have longed for. Mr. Voorhees has greatly helped the work and we are grateful to him for his generous gifts. We have succeeded in erecting a large two-story school building which contains three offices, four class rooms, library, reading room and large chapel.

"The school owns a horse, two wagons, a mule, three cows and nine hogs.

"The total receipts for the year have been $8,975-.42, of which $4,500 were spent in the purchase of the farm, $1,950 for the erection of the school building, Kennerly Hall, $750 for teachers' salaries, $800 for farm expenses and the remainder, $875, has been available for current expenses."

The plans for further development of the plant were embodied in the following report of a committee of the Trustee Board:

Mr. President:

Your committee to whom was referred the report of Miss Wright, the Principal, beg leave to report that we have duly and carefully considered it and respectfully report:

1. We concur in the Principal's report as to the urgent need of a dormitory for girls of sufficient size to accommodate the girls and teachers together with

such other appointments as may be necessary, including dining rooms, reception rooms, etc., and we further recommend that the Principal secure plans from the architectural department of the Tuskegee Institute, at an estimated cost of not less than $2,000.

2. We recommend also that if sufficient funds can be obtained, erection of a dormitory for boys of the same size and appointments as for girls. Details to be left to the Principal and architect.

3. We recommend that a suitable barn be erected and such appointments as may be necessary to care for stock, tools, etc.

4. We concur in the recommendation as to the needs of suitable industrial pursuits for the students, and to this end recommend that a shoemaker's outfit, blacksmith tools, and a dairying outfit be secured together with suitable agricultural implements to till the farm in the most improved agricultural manner, and that the Principal be authorized to secure one or more turning plows, weeder, two-horse cultivator and a mower.

5. We especially commend the Principal in the way she has erected Kennerly Hall, named in remembrance of Mrs. Ellen M. Kennerly. We regard it as having been erected for less money for its size, finish and accommodations, of any building we have ever known. We cannot speak too highly of the economy, judgment and management of the Principal in this and all other matters pertaining to the school.

6. We are gratified at the change of the school from the former location to the present, for there is

more room and it is better suited for the purpose than the former location. There is on the 280 acres of the school's farm much fine timber, suitable for building and manufacturing purposes, while the land is well adapted to dairying and other agricultural pursuits. We regard the location as an ideal one. We cannot pass from this subject without expressing our gratitude to the donor, Mr. Ralph Voorhees, for his liberal gift of this splendid tract of land and we recommend that a vote of thanks be tendered to him and to his inestimable wife.

7. We also recommend that a vote of thanks be tendered to others who have contributed so liberally by gifts of money, property and personal aid.

8. We also recommend a vote of thanks to the Tuskegee Institute for the design and specifications of the Administration building.

Respectfully submitted,
Hon. S. G. Mayfield,
M. W. Gilbert,
M. A. Menafee.

The one horse mentioned among the school's assets when it was moved to the new site was the first horse the school ever owned. She was bought the year before and was used in cultivating the twenty-acre tract of land in East Denmark. Her name, "Black Beauty," is fairly descriptive of her general appearance. She was heavy set, thick and of medium height, with a decided tendency toward the Norman breed. Because she was gentle she became the school's pet and was soon relieved of farm duties. In a way, she was the office horse, carrying the mail

FIRST COW BARN

MAKING SYRUP ON THE FARM

and express between the school and the village. She grew old in this service, surviving the school's founder by a number of years. She was finally superannuated to the campus green, where she finished her days peacefully, the object of veneration to all who knew her splendid record of service. Only recently has she died; and certainly this brief reference is not out of place, nor would it have been distasteful to Miss Wright, who blessed everybody and everything who served faithfully any interest of the Voorhees Industrial School.

May 15, 1902, was the day selected on which to dedicate the new school building. A beautiful service of praise and thanksgiving was held in the Chapel preceding the regular dedicatory exercises which was witnessed by a large number of friends from far and near. Mr. and Mrs. Voorhees had been invited but circumstances prevented their attending. They wrote: "We send you greetings, and wish you great success in the setting apart of this new building for educational and industrial purposes; and may it indeed prove to be a blessing to all who may come within its walls for instruction, that thereby they may be better fitted for the duties and responsibilities of life."

After it was decided to change the name of the school in honor of Mr. Voorhees, it seemed most appropriate to the founder to perpetuate the memory of another friend, who in her own way had helped the cause when it needed help the most. And so the new building was dedicated as "Kennerly Hall" in honor of Mrs. Ellen M. Kennerly, mother-in-law of

Senator Mayfield, a woman of superior character and refinement. At their first meeting a friendship sprung up between her and Miss Wright that never waned while the two lived. She did a world of good in private conversation in smoothing out the way for the final establishment of an industrial school for colored people in Denmark. In the quietude of her home she urged visitors of both races to support Miss Wright in her undertaking. It was largely due to her interest and efforts that her distinguished son-in-law became so staunch and lasting a friend to Miss Wright and her school. It was a rare friendship between two noble souls without prejudice or suspicion, although the one was white and the other black, and both were born and reared in the South. It overtopped the traditional Southern attitude as the mountain pine does the cactus plant of the desert. But it pointed the only way out of the maelstrom of race antagonism. If the South only knew the things that make for it peace and prosperity, it would exalt such friendships more and take less stock in the orgies of crime that tend to widen the gap between the vital interests of the two racial groups. It is desired that Kennerly Hall shall be rebuilt and enlarged to keep pace with the increasing demands of the school, and that it shall remain upon the campus, a people's building to keep alive the fragrance of this quiet but most helpful friendship.

In the Principal's report for 1902 the following recorded facts of progress are made:

"Since my last report there has been received in

our treasury from all sources, $12,517.52, the farm receipts alone amounted to $1,452.09. The regular donors have responded freely, and many new friends have been made this term.

"The number of students enrolled this school term has been 252, with an average attendance of 225—192 were pupils in the children's school, known as our 'Training School.' The small children have a garden and are taught to sow seeds and to work plants.

"Ten teachers and officers are employed for the various departments of the school.

"Through the kindness of friends, means have been provided for several buildings which we have suffered greatly by not having. Our dear friend, Mr. Ralph Voorhees, of New Jersey, provided means for the beautiful Elizabeth Voorhees Dormitory for girls, which was completed a few days ago, and he has also provided means for the Elizabeth Wright Dormitory for boys, which is now being erected. It was his request to have twin buildings. The names were given by him.

"The Misses Collins, Mr. and Mrs. Andrieni, Messrs. Ball and Bradford, provided means for a large barn for our stock. A New York friend gave means for a blacksmith shop, which we hope to have ready by October 1, 1903. A school house for the small children has been erected, also a laundry. Both buildings are entirely too small and room must be added as soon as means can be gotten."

It seems almost unbelievable that before her very eyes the things she had dreamed about through so

many unpromising years were springing into reality. The rate at which the plant was now developing surpassed anything that she had dared hope for in the past. The wonder of it all sobered her, and she thought the present the supreme moment to revisit Tuskegee, her Alma Mater. It was a time for meditation and prayer, and such a season is not spent most profitably when spent too near the firing line. Our teacher needed distance to lend the proper perspective to the events now enshrouding her very existence. She would disentangle herself and draw away to Tuskegee where first she had the dream and look back for a better view and more exact interpretation. Mr. Washington's counsel so much prized in her school days would certainly be helpful now. And so she journeyed to this Mecca of industrial training for colored young men and women. Once there she was rebaptized in the Tuskegee spirit, and spent nearly two weeks studying more closely the Tuskegee method. Her vision also was reorganized and brought down to practical details. When she returned to Denmark she had her future course so well mapped out, that she was less likely to misdirect the agencies now at her disposal for building the school, than she would have been had she remained amid the confusion of success without the quiet hour and distant view.

A letter from Judge Kelley about this time reflects the exuberance of her own mental state:

'Rockland, Mass., Dec. 15, 1903.

"Dear Miss Wright:

"You may be sure that it will give me great pleasure, some day, to ride out to the school in that dou-

ble buggy you are building, and look over your large stock, mules, horses, cows, calves, and your extensive acres, tilled to the limit; your great and numerous buildings containing schools and industries; and last, but surely not least, your army of students and batallion of teachers. It seems to be a dream, when we think back to McNeals and Early Branch and Hampton. Miss Dorsey and you must sit down sometimes together and, in your minds, travel back over the road you have come. In counting results you will entirely forget numerous trials, discomforts and discouragements. When I am next at Denmark we three will take just that mental journey.

"Sincerely yours,

"Geo. W. Kelley."

The Principal's annual report for 1903 noted the following changes and improvements:

"The girls' dormitory was burned December 20th, after which we sent most of our students home to stay, but they all came pouring back after the holidays, some bringing new ones with them. They were willing to suffer in order that the work might not stop; and during this time I heard from our dear Mr. Voorhees, asking me to bring them all back into the Voorhees fold. After all much has been accomplished. Out of calamity we have received great blessings. It has been seven years since the inception of the school, and it has already outgrown my expectations. The entire enrollment was 299, with seventy-five in the boarding department.

"Thirteen teachers and officers are employed for the various departments of the school.

"On account of ill health only a few new friends have been made this term.

"The blacksmith shop and Elizabeth E. Wright Hall have been completed and are in daily use. Elizabeth R. Voorhees Hall which was destroyed by fire has been replaced. What the insurance did not cover our friend, Mr. Ralph Voorhees, made it possible that the building could be put back immediately, and this one is giving much better satisfaction than the first one. Besides, a hennery has been erected, two rooms added to one of our cottages, our Chapel has been fitted with benches made by our boys; Kennerly Hall has been painted and a board fence put along the road in front of our grounds, which adds much to the general appearance, and a room has been fitted out for a library and we have about a thousand volumes in it.

"Our farm is well supplied with stock. Mr. Philo S. Mead, our Kansas friend, gave us 22 cows, 10 mules and 6 horses, valued at $1,900, during the year. Our boys have made two very nice buggies in our wheelwright department, and in our carpentry division our boys made the tables and the washstands for Elizabeth R. Voorhees and Elizabth E. Wright Halls. Excellent work is being done in our printing office, and the school saves quite a sum from it. We print a little paper, "The Southern Voice," (first issued in January of this year), which is sent to our donors. We have received a number of encouraging letters concerning our paper."

THE BOOKER T. WASHINGTON HOSPITAL

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

The plant was increased in value from $15,000 to $25,000.

By May of 1905 the valuation of the school property had made another $10,000 advance. Mr. M. J. Weston and Mrs. Henry Wood gave means for a brick kitchen which had been completed; also a two-story frame cottage where girls' industries were being taught had been erected. And the Booker T. Washington Hospital, a large two-story brick building, seventy-nine by ninety feet, containing thirty rooms, including male and female wards, etc., was under construction. It was completed the same year at a cost of $15,000 and was the gift of Mr. Voorhees, who also planned to follow this with the Boys' Trades Building which was designed to cost $10,000.

During the 1905 school term, 112 students were admitted to the boarding department which were thirty-seven more than the previous year, and one more teacher was added to the force.

The first issue of *The Assistant,* another little monthly paper, gotten out for circulation among the school's patrons in the State, was brought out this year.

As a crowning blessing of this most prosperous year Miss Wright received from Clinton the following letter dated December 20th:

"My Dear Miss Wright:—

I saw in last month's 'Southern Voice' that you would like to purchase an adjoining tract of land comprising 94 acres, which could be bought for $2,500. I know of no better Christmas gift for the 'Voorhees Industrial School' than to give it this

tract of land. Hence I send you this check of $2,500 to be used for the purchase of this land, which you will please do at once.

"I am glad your school is opening so prosperously this fall. May this be your best and most prosperous year, and may God's richest blessings rest upon you all.

"Yours very truly,

"Ralph Voorhees."

No better word than "prosperous" could have been used to describe the work of that year, as well as the general condition of the school. Everywhere about the broad campus there was joy and smiling success. Miss Wright herself wrote concerning this period of the school's life: "Our school is spreading out its arms, and its influence is being felt all over the State. Our attendance has been larger this year than ever before. We have students from five different States and from seven counties in South Carolina. The Training School is entirely too small for the number of children who attend. When we see our young men and women growing stronger morally, mentally and physically and willing to stand up for the right, then we feel that progress is being made. Next year we hope to graduate a class, the first one the school has ever had. During this school year we have received from all sources $21,978.82, and we have made more new friends for the work during this term than ever before in the history of the school."

The same was true of the farm; the acreage under cultivation was larger, the yield better. Mr. Jenkins

FARMERS AT ANNUAL CONFERENCE

had organized a Farmers' Conference whose members met each month to discuss the best methods of farming. As an immediate outgrowth, three of the members had already purchased farms.

The work of construction on the new Boys' Trades Building was well under way, and at the same time a dairy building was in process of erection. Grateful students were engaged on both buildings making possible the education they had longed for in vain until this new school had come upon the scene. Another group was running a fence around the entire farm.

The live stock was in splendid condition, and rendering the largest possible help from that angle of the work.

Seventeen teachers and officers were engaged guiding the school's growing activities, and they were all loyal and efficient. These were supported in their work by a busy set of office girls who kept up with the increasing volume of correspondence.

And last, but by no means least, the Principal, herself, who but a year previous had been confined in an Augusta hospital, was now at a high water mark in improved health. Surely no brighter day had ever shone for this earnest, hard-working woman. The hardships of the past were gradually losing their significance, and the future was bright and open.

Such a time in human affairs, in the life of institutions, and even in nature, usually presages some extraordinary event to fix permanently as a model for future generations to marvel at, seek to avoid,

or strive to attain. In nature it foretells either storm or fair weather; in institutions, either fire or more rapid development; in human affairs, some permanent change. It may be for the better, it may be for the worse; but nevertheless a change. With her enemies sulking behind in defeat, and her friends surrounding her with cheer, and the work advancing without a hitch, Miss Wright had little time for reflection, for self-study.

On closer view within she found lurking there full grown, a profound respect for the treasurer of her enterprise, Mr. Martin A. Menafee. That it was quite different from the ordinary respect for fellow-workers she had never taken time to determine, and her nearest friends had not even suspected its presence. Now it was insistent. She freely consulted her friends as to the best use to make of it for the good of the school. All decided that she was justly entitled to the companionship of a good husband, and so on the 2nd day of June, 1906, in the reception room of Elizabeth R. Voorhees Hall, in the presence of the school family, she was married to Mr. Menafee, by Drs. R. C. Bedford and E. R. Roberts. The change had come.

CHAPTER X

THE SUMMONS

Miss Wright had paused for a brief space to think on her personal affairs, which she had seldom done since she first conceived the idea of establishing an industrial school after the Tuskegee model. The immediate result of this pause was the change of her relation from single estate to that of married woman. Heretofore she had been so deeply wedded to the school as to almost completely obliterate herself and any purely personal interest. She had not thought for a moment that the full realization of the aims of the school could be anything different from the things that made for her own well-rounded and complete life. She had been accustomed to thinking of the school and herself as one and inseparable. The same object she had set as a goal before the school is what she pursued every day as the chief business of her life. For the school she worded it thus:

"The object of the school is to go into the rural districts and try to reach the masses, and provide for them an education as will most benefit them for the duties of life. It is our object to educate the heart, head and hand, and we feel that industrial education should be given if we hope to accomplish the most good. We are realizing more fully each day that a higher education is for the few, an industrial training, along with an academic education, is

for the masses. As ignorance and superstition have not been obliterated but exist in the rural districts today, it is our desire to go into these places and give the youth a thorough mental and religious training. Where ignorance and superstition reign there must be vice and crime, and we are doing all we can to create love and purity among the negroes in the rural places. If we can provide industrial training along with an academic course, such training will enable the boys and girls to get a firm foundation, and then they will be able to obtain an honest living, and be respected by other races and recognized as good citizens."

This was the code of her life which she thought on by day and dreamed of by night with a self-forgetfulness that is beautiful to contemplate. From 1894, when she came to South Carolina and located in Hampton County, until the school was opened in Denmark in April, 1897, Miss Wright had received no definite support for herself. She traveled all over three counties and worked hard in three definite efforts to establish her school for three successive years without receiving one penny of salary. She lived upon the hospitality of those with whom she come in contact, and for whose welfare she was seeking to build. It was a meagre hospitality, of course, and often denied, but she put up with it. Frequently during these years her frocks became threadbare and she had no wardrobe from which to replace them. At such times she is known to have tarried by the way at the homes of friends until such garments could be repaired. Likewise did her

shoes often give out on long walking tours and friends had to come to the rescue.

In the first printed annual report of the treasurer of the school, which was made in May, 1902, just five years after the 1897 beginning in Denmark, the following statement is recorded: "All the teachers have been paid in full, save Miss Wright, who has never received any salary. In an act in the meeting of the Trustees in March, 1901, it was decided that she receive a salary. The school now owes her $480." The following is the statement referred to in the minutes of the Trustees' meeting: "The manager's salary was, upon conference with her, fixed at $20 per month for twelve months in the year." This indicated that the eight years that Miss Wright had now been at work upon her school project, six of them had been spent with no salary consideration whatever; and of the other two, not one penny of the $20 per month agreed upon had been paid. This matter is again referred to in the Treasurer's report for the year ending May 30th, 1904. Then he says: "I am very glad to say that the institution ends this year practically clear of all indebtedness, aside from the amount due the Principal, which is $750, being the amount accumulated for the past six years' work."

And yet some people marvel still, and ask, how did she do it? They do not appreciate the power of whole-hearted self-surrender to work miracles into the natural order of things. Silas X. Floyd, who knew Miss Wright in the days of her early struggles, said in a Founder's Day address, delivered at the

school some years since: "Men looked at Miss Wright and said she was too weak; she simply could not accomplish that upon which she had set her heart and mind and soul. She was bound to fail. Few could see how it could be otherwise, seeing that she was so feeble in health, and her plans were so ambitious. But she did succeed."

How did she do it? Well, this is how she did it; while going sometimes without food, poorly clad, and without promise or hope of financial reward, she was toiling day and night for others. Continuing, Mr. Floyd said: "Soon or late, rain or shine, she was about her Father's business (which was the school's business, identical with hers). The account of her life is full of pathetic incidents of weary wandering from place to place here in South Carolina, often on foot for long and dreary miles, in the heat of summer and in the cold of winter; of journeys to the North in search of friends for her work, in search of money with which to keep things going; of being everywhere at all times of the day and night; here in these buildings and on these grounds, in order to see that everything was going right in the garden, on the farm, in the school room, in the work shops."

Mrs. Wright-Menafee was still looking ahead and planning larger things for the school. She had said to the Trustees: "The end of our next school year will bring us to the completion of one decade, and as we have an industrial day in April, I recommend that we combine the Industrial Day and the Tenth Anniversary, and invite our friends to visit

us. It would be wise to set the day aside for the purpose of raising an endowment fund."

But she was destined not to reach in earthly frame that Tenth Anniversary Day in April. So the concluding remarks are taken from that 1906 report, being the last she made, and inserted here as the valedictory of a splendid worker in a noble cause:

"In conclusion I must say that I can never thank our donors enough for what they have done for us. Teachers and students were remembered Thanksgiving and Christmas in a very pleasant way. Our donors sent us money on both occasions, and sent gifts for a Christmas tree, which was a source of untold pleasure to the children. From their generosity we have been able to help scores of boys and girls to become better and start out in life in a more intelligent way of living. A great many have sent the Principal personal gifts for which she is very grateful. We feel that we have a more loyal band of helpers than any of the schools, and great good can be accomplished for the children of the rural districts.

"I heartily thank the Trustees for their co-operation and sympathy. We will try to prove worthy and make the institution what it should be.

"Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth E. Wright, Principal."

It is fair to say that she had not intended this as her farewell message to her friends and fellow-workers, but the fates had so designed it, and so no time was allotted to make revisions. When the brief summer was well on toward July Mrs. Wright

Menafee's health once more began to show signs of weakness. The local school doctor was called in and attended her on the campus for a couple of weeks. Upon his advice she was taken to the hospital in Augusta, Ga., an institution in which she had previously spent some time. From there she was finally transferred to the Battle Creek Sanatorium where after a serious operation and nearly two months of intense suffering, she passed quietly over the River on the morning of December 14, 1906, to the rest she had so well deserved. Her fortitude in sickness was matched only by the patient endurance that characterized her whole life's career.

The sad news was sent over the wires to many of her most intimate friends, and those most deeply concerned in the welfare of the school. Genuine sorrow prevailed throughout both circles, but nowhere was a single note of despair sounded. A letter from Mr. Voorhees to Mr. Menafee at this time is characteristic:

"Clinton, N. J., Dec. 15, 1906.

"Mr. Menafee,

"Dear Sir:

"Your telegram announcing the condition of Mrs. Menafee was received yesterday afternoon. In the evening Miss Dorsey sent one saying Mrs. Menafee had just passed away; and this morning we received another from you stating the same fact. And so, we have hoped against hope, but our hopes have not been realized. God had planned it otherwise. Her work on earth was done and she has gone to her

BEDFORD DINING HALL

BOYS' TRADE BUILDING

reward. Let this be your comfort and consolation, that she hath done what she could.

"In this your hour of sorrow, we send you our condolence and deepest sympathy, commending you to God whose Grace we know shall be sufficient for you. 'Voorhees School' has met with a great loss in losing her Principal, and we cannot see how her place can be filled, but the All-Seeing One can see, and doubtless will provide a successor. In Him we will trust. Principals may come and Principals may die, but Voorhees School will go right on forever. I suppose you will bury her remains at Denmark. Peace be to her ashes, and everlasting repose to her soul.

Another soul has crossed the moaning of the bar,
And has put out to sea:
The billowy sea is passed;
The port of Peace is reached;
The Pilot's voice is heard,
Sweet rest to weary feet.

"Yours in sympathy,
Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Voorhees."

The body was prepared and sent on to Denmark where it was taken and deposited in its last resting place over on the little mound by the roadside just outside the regular campus grounds, where it shall abide undisturbed; while all around it the siprit of Elizabeth Evelyn Wright-Menafee shall live on and on everlastingly in the work of the school.

CHAPTER XI

THE MANTLE OF AUTHORITY AND THE MAN AT THE HELM

The places left vacant by men and women of determination, originality and initiative, who are pioneers in their particular field or work, usually are hard to fill. As a rule such persons blaze new trails, do things in untried ways, and build after their own model. Such a person was Theodore Roosevelt in the political life of this nation; such a person was Booker T. Washington in the educational advance; such a person was Elizabeth Evelyn Wright-Menafee, with probably less of originality, but with a determination and initiative that made her work as distinctively her own as that of the other two. It took fully six years before she began to set the pace in school building, but when she did begin she strode in seven-league boots. Now quitting these monster strides so early after she had caught the step herself, left the Trustees of the Voorhees Industrial School a most difficult task in finding a successor who, beginning where she left off, could walk in her footsteps to the seven-league music of progress.

They searched, and in the meantime:

The man at the helm, Prof. Martin A. Menafee, Treasurer, had the school's affairs so well in hand that the work had gone steadily forward without a break, and along the very lines mapped out by the founder, without waiting for the directing hand of

a new Principal. For so responsible a position he was peculiarly qualified, both by training and long and vital connection with the work.

This man, Menafee, was born of poor parents, on a farm in Lee County, Alabama. As soon as he was able to do anything he was put to work on the farm, and did not see inside of a school house until he was twelve years old. Then he was sent for two school years of three months each, which was the extent of his preparation for life. However, he very early suffered an accident which disabled his right arm. With this physical handicap he began to feel more keenly the need of a better preparation for life's duties. And now he determined to seek this preparation on his own account. Being without money, he was refused admission to the first college at which he applied for entrance. Then he learned of Tuskegee and matriculated there, only to find what so many before his day and so many since have found; that the early dreams of Tuskegee on the part of prospective students, usually lose their charms when the new matriculate dons his overalls and goes out for his first day's work. There is no tendency at Tuskegee, or any of its branches, to sugar-coat this introductory work. Everything about it is so awfully real, that one who has not made up his mind fully to some definite purpose, and has confidence that the work he is undertaking leads straight to that goal, will not be inclined to stick through to the end. In his first try-out Mr. Menafee fell in the latter class. He had a purpose but it did not stand out clear enough to justify him in holding on to the brick-

yard job which was given him upon arrival at Tuskegee. He thus reports that experience in Mr. Washington's book, "Tuskegee and its People:"

"I was promptly assigned to work in the brick-yard. After I had been there for two days I found that the sun had no pity on, nor patience with me; it seemed to blister me through and through. I finally concluded that the sun, together with the brick-yard, was blasting the hopes I had entertained and the determination I had fostered, of securing an education. I tried to get my work changed, but the Director of Industries did not see it as I did, and would not do it The next thing that I settled upon for relief was to get sick, but a day's trial of that showed that would not work. I decided that I would return home, where I was sure I would at least find no brick-yard to harass or disturb. My stay at the school was just about seven or eight days."

To put such work at the door of entrance to an institution of learning is diplomatic. It is a splendid test of sincerity and honesty of purpose. It sifts out the drones in the very outset and is a measure of the ability and willingness of those who remain to pay the full price for the success they crave.

As a quitter, our hero sought admission to another school of less heroic requirements. In this cooler atmosphere he spent one year, but claims that during this time he thought constantly of Tuskegee and that "brick-yard" and could not for the life of him any more become reconciled to the easier prospects ahead. He would go back to Tuskegee and try again.

His purpose now was well-formed and out of the mist. He was resolved to pay the price. He would not fail where so many others were succeeding.

The second year found him back at Tuskegee. Mr. Washington required of him an open apology before the whole school for having left without an excuse. This ordeal passed he was glad now to undertake any kind of work. Being assigned to the farm he determined to win his way by faithful service to what he most desired, which was a course in stenography and typewriting. He spent six years at Tuskegee, and was honorably graduated there with the class of 1900.

A further word from Mr. Menafee:

"Mr. Bedford had secured a position for me at Denmark, S. C., as stenographer to the Principal, Miss Elizabeth E. Wright, a Tuskegee graduate. I entered upon my new duties October 1, 1900. The school at that time was in what was then known as East Denmark, being one mile from the village proper. Upon my arrival I found the school in possession of a twenty-acre tract of land in the village, a horse and wagon, seven hives of bees and some chickens. No one met me at the station, and so I found my way out to the school by inquiry. There were four teachers and three boarding students in the school family. The teachers were Misses E. E. Wright, J C. Dorsey, Louise Nettles, and Mr. Mahone. The ladies were living at that time in an old two-story frame house located upon this twenty-acre tract of land and a rickety old tenant house near by was being used for the school building. They had day pupils

in large numbers, running from three to four hundred.

"I found Miss Wright busy, and full of zeal and ambition to build an institution. However, I must state frankly that I did not see much to represent the institution she was so enthusiastic about. They had only two meals a day, and this was a practice I had never been able to reconcile myself to. After I was there a week or more, I asked her if I could have three meals, to which she agreed. The school was very poor and the teachers got what they had to eat, mainly by going around the neighborhood asking the patrons to share their own table provisions with them, and such other eatables as they could spare. I was not used to anything of that kind and felt very much embarrassed when she would ask folks for such things."

Mr. Menafee was here only a short time in the capacity of stenographer and bookkeeper. Three months after his arrival on the grounds he was appointed treausrer, being elected to said position at a special meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Denmark Industrial School, held in the teachers' home at 5:00 p. m., September 16, 1901, on motion of Miss Wright, the Principal.

At the second regular annual meeting of the Board of Trustees, which was held in the chapel of "Kennerly Hall," at 10:30 a. m., May 14, 1902, he was, on motion of R. C. Bedford, unanimously elected a trustee of the school.

From this time on the history of his life, like that of the founder, merges into the history of the school.

And what is said of one may with equal propriety and truthfulness be said of the other. And even before this time his growing influence and well-balanced judgment had proved a very decisive factor in bringing about the school's better adjustment to the difficult local situation.

The search of the Trustees for some one broad enough in intellectual calibre and in the sweep of his vision of unselfish service, to successfully sustain the mantle of authority flung back upon the school as the great soul of the late Principal passed into the beyond, had ended in a carpenter's shop at Fort Valley, Ga. Down there Dr. R. C. Bedford found a man, who in 1894 had found Tuskegee and in every test given him by that institution, famous for the severity of its tests, had proved himself worthy through a period of six years. He was now superintending the industries of the Fort Valley High and Industrial School, and had made good. He was in line for higher service, or to be more exact, for service higher up. The call came, and after prayerful consideration, he finally consented to accept the position, and to be the first to try on the seven-league boots to whose manly strides the late Principal had set the pace of her work.

GABRIEL B. MILLER, PRINCIPAL, 1907-1911.

Principal Miller was not able to be present at the commencement in April, but came later on in the summer. He was unassuming, studious and very thorough in his work. The first year he spent largely in a quiet study of the situation, and in getting his

bearing. However, the school continued to advance in material equipment. This year a 40-horse steam engine and boiler were installed. It was the gift of Mrs. Voorhees, and was used to operate a saw mill and the machinery for the Boys' Industrial building. Two houses were erected, known as the Hill Cottage and Wood Cottage for teachers' homes. The shops in the Boys' Industrial Building were fitted out with tools and machinery, and many fruit and shade trees were added to the orchard and campus.

The next year a water system for the whole campus was constructed. It consisted of a 15,000-gallon tank, on a seventy-foot steel tower, two bath houses for boys and girls, and a three-inch water main, taking water to every important building on the campus. This was the gift of Miss Olivia E. P. Stokes, who was one of Miss Wright's first, largest and most constant supporters. She made this gift out of respect for her memory. The Howland cottage was added to the teachers' homes, and the first County Fair was held in connection with the Farmers' Conference. This fair is to be held every year on the school grounds. There was an attendance during the two days of the fair of about four or five thousand persons, mostly farmers. The farm products, horses, cows, fruits, needle work, etc., made a very creditable show for the farmers and their wives.

It was in the industrial department and along such lines of community interest that the influence of Principal Miller was making itself more decidedly

felt. This feature of the work was growing in importance under his leadership.

On the 16th of March of this year the school was highly honored by the presence of Mr. Booker T. Washington and his party of educators and leading colored men of South Carolina. They spent practically a whole day on the campus. From a platform constructed out-of-doors in front of the main building, Dr. Washington delivered one of his characteristic addresses to a multitude of farmers from all parts of the surrounding country, many of whom had come a distance of twenty miles and more to hear him speak. He and his party made a thorough inspection of all the dormitories, workshops and other buildings. He expressed himself as being very well pleased with what he saw. This was the first and last time the great leader visited the Voorhees Normal and Industrial School. He was introduced by one of our Trustees, Senator Mayfield, of Denmark, S. C., who in his opening remarks paid a high tribute to the character and work of our Founder and late Principal. It was a red letter day in the history of the school from which it has greatly benefited.

This year Mr. Miller's program as a Principal showed its greatest success and incidentally its one critical defect. On the side of its success all the industries were well-organized and at their highest point of efficiency yet realized. Especially was this true of the farm which was passing through the period of its greatest yield. Of nearly all farm pro-

ducts the school had enough for its own use and some for the local market.

As to the Fair, the products that were placed on exhibition last year exceeded those of the first year by more than fifteen per cent. in quality. There had been great enthusiasm aroused. The farmer and his wife had gone back home determined not only to win the prizes on their products next year, but to produce more and to have more varied crops. From the statistics given by our farm manager, covering the territory of our local conferences, the corn yield has been increased more than twenty per cent. in three years among the farmers who have been aroused through the influence of the conference.

The general government became interested in this work. Its representative visited the Fair last year and made a report to the State Colaborator who has charge of the demonstration work in agriculture (Mr. Ira Williams). He proposed the appointment of our farm manager as district colaborator on satisfactory recommendation, which was furnished by Senator Mayfield.

There is no better way of judging the influence and value of an institution than by the effect it has upon a community. The farmers reached through our Farmers' Conference have in the last three years cut down their acreage about 20 per cent., hence they cultivate their crops more rapidly, with less expense, and consequently clear more money. And the relations between the white and colored people become more and more congenial.

Turning now to observe the new Principal in his activities for financial support and academic control. In these affairs it is only fair to state that he had neither training nor experience. Finding the Treasurer hard pressed for funds to meet current expenses, he promptly packed his suit case and traveled North among the proverbially rich and generous. It was his first trip on this kind of mission and he stopped in Philadelphia, later going on to New York. He first tried to reach some well known philanthropists in their offices, but was unable to break through the outer barrier of secretaries and attendants. He was working on short notice, and could not well brook the hopeless delay involved in such cases, so he immediately changed his tactics, venturing on a house to house canvass among the more pretentious dwellings of the residential section.

When given time to explain his mission he usually elicited a courteous refusal with regrets; but this was very seldom, as the door maids in most of the houses at which he called appeared to have been on to his game, and paid no attention whatever to the ringing of the door bell. Still others were less considerate, being more violent in their behavior towards his approach. At one great house where he stood for a minute waiting in agitated expectancy the approach thinking the while of words for the most concise of footsteps that appeared to be coming down stairs, form for his appeal, when suddenly the door opened with a jerk, and a fat middle aged woman holding one hand concealed behind her, fairly fell in the entrance and demanded in the most excited and angry

voice, "What do thee want? What do thee want?" "Nothing," was the only reply Mr. Miller could think of under the circumstances and he repeated, "Nothing!" as he backed down the steps in confusion.

At another place the Principal was met at the door by a civil looking man who proceeded to deliver him a lecture on the annoyance to the community of such beggars as he, and threatened in rather uncivil language to invoke the arm of the law for his protection.

It may be that his method was at fault, or it may be that he simply got into the wrong community, but the effect on his courage was fatal. He returned to the school without a penny in the way of donations, and thoroughly convinced that begging money from the public to carry on activities of an industrial school was not his forte. Although Mrs. Voorhees sent $25,000 the next year to be added to the endownment fund it did not change his attitude toward the work of financing the plant. At the very next meeting of the Trustees, Mr. Miller handed in his resignation as Principal of the Voorhees Normal and Industrial School, and turned himself about to seek again the pleasure that once was his among the blue prints of the draftsman's board.

CYRUS CAMPFIELD, PRINCIPAL, 1912.

At the April meeting of the Board of Trustees in 1911, Mr. Cyrus Campfield, another graduate of Tuskegee Institute, was elected Principal of the Voorhees Normal and Industrial School, to succeed Mr.

Miller. He entered upon the duties of his office immediately and spent one year as the active head of the institution. Mr. Campfield devoted most of his time this first year to a careful study of the situation and the best policy for its future management. When the Turstees came together for the 1912 meeting the new Principal had his policy well formulated and ready to present. But the Trustees balked at some of the changes anticipated in his new scheme. They had no guarantee that it would beat the old way of conducting the school's affairs. They were already committed to the one policy of carrying out the Founder's purpose and plans for the work. After a thorough canvass of the situation it was thought best that Mr. Campfield should resign and leave the position to some one who would lend himself more readily to the accomplishment of the Wright ideal with as few changes as possible.

This year the school suffered a distinct, personal loss in the death of Rev. R. C. Bedford, D.D., of Beloit, Wisconsin. Dr. Bedford had been a trustee and friend of this institution from its very beginning; always busy in its interest, seeking friends for it, helping to plan and locate its buildings, securing its teachers and encouraging Miss Wright in all her efforts. He died at Los Angeles, California, December 30, 1911. Suitable memorial exercises were held in Kennerly Hall Chapel, Sunday evening, January 7, 1912. Appropriate resolutions were adopted, a copy of which was mailed to his widow and a copy ordered spread upon the journal of Faculty and Trustees. We are thankful for the life and work of Dr. Bedford.

His spirit will live in the hearts and lives of the thousands of colored men and women who were helped by his extensive labors among us.

The year was also marked by an increase of $55,604.66 in the endowment fund.

INTERREGNUM. 1912-1916

The Trustees were now fully aware of the fact that Elizabeth E. Wright-Menafee was a woman of unusual ability who had created her own position, and leaving that position vacant had left to them a most difficult task in getting a man to fill it satisfactorily. They resolved now to take time and apply a common measure to each applicant before giving him a trial.

Meantime, Martin A. Menafee, Treasurer,—The Man at the Helm—drove ahead with the work of the school, and the accustomed rate of progress was maintained.

An electric lighting plant was installed, the gift of Miss O. E. P. Stokes. Soon afterwards a telephone system was built, connecting the principal buildings and departments with the main offices. And then a beautiful brick dining hall was added to the campus buildings, as a memorial to the late Dr. Bedford. Another cottage for teachers was also built in 1913.

The next two years saw the general improvements continued. The services of a landscape gardener were secured and the campus laid off and beautified with walks, trees and shrubbery. Then the building program came to a climax in the new Administration Building. It is a two-story brick structure, situated in excellent command of the main entrance to the

grounds. And then after four years of scanning the field and sizing up applicants:

ELECTION OF A NEW PRINCIPAL

At the adjourned meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees, on February 3, 1916, Mr. Jesse O. Thomas, a Tuskegee graduate, was elected Principal and Field Agent of the Voorhees Normal and Industrial School. Mr. Thomas entered upon his duties in May. He showed much zeal in his work, and being a good speaker he succeeded in winning several new friends for the school. He secured means to build a house for the Principal. At the end of two years of active service he offered his resignation which was accepted by the Trustees.

REV. E. R. ROBERTS, D. D. PRINCIPAL 1919.

At a meeting of the Executive Committee, April 4, 1919, Dr. E. R. Roberts, of Florence, S. C., was elected Principal of the Voorhees Normal and Industrial School. Dr. Roberts has been one of the Trustees of the school since it was organized, and knows the work thoroughly, and is in full sympathy with the principles of the Founder and will certainly work harmoniously with the administration to make the school what it should be.

The new Principal has just rounded out his first year and is facing the future with high hopes.

Mr. Floyd's Founder's Day remarks are appropriate in this connection also:

"In paying tribute to the departed, we must not forget at this time to speak some word of praise of those who have kept this work going since Mrs. Menafee left. You have heard it stated already that at

the time of her death the grounds and buildings were valued at $60,000. Since then a number of new buildings have been erected, and an endownment, a very small one for such a big undertaking, has been provided, and today the plant, including the endowment fund, is valued at $245,000. Mrs. Wright-Menafee laid the foundation but others have built well the fine super-structure, and these others—chiefly Martin A. Menafee, (the treasurer of this school for a great number of years, both before and since his wife's death), and the noble Trustees who have stood by him deserve great credit for the admirable work they have done in keeping together and adding to the great work of the Founder."

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